

A high-contrast, black and white portrait of a man wearing a hat, looking slightly to the left. The image is heavily stylized with a grainy, high-contrast aesthetic, resembling a photocopy or a heavily processed photograph. The man's face is the central focus, with his features rendered in stark white against a dark background. He is wearing a dark, wide-brimmed hat that casts a shadow over his eyes. The overall composition is framed by a thick black border.

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



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"Portrait of a Man Wearing a Hat with a Medallion" by Hans Holbein the Younger from the exhibition *Master Drawings: The Woodner Collection* at the Royal Academy until October 25

Tom Paulin

GERALD ROBERTS (Editor)
Gerard Manley Hopkins: The critical heritage
 400pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £27.50.
 0710204140

CATHERINE PHILIPS (Editor)
Gerard Manley Hopkins
 429pp. Oxford University Press: The Oxford
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 0192541900

In May 1884 Coventry Patmore told Robert Bridges that Hopkins's poetry had "the effect of veins of pure gold imbedded in masses of unpracticable quartz". Patmore's criticism is based on an idea of literary decorum which rests on a belief in the class system: the gold of a pure poetic English must be permanently cordoned off from the quartz masses grunting their rough and worthless dialects. Yet it was from various regional and working-class vernaculars that Hopkins drew his essential melodic inspiration:

Lancashire - "of all the wind instruments big droom fots me best". - Old Wells directing someone how to set a wedge in a tree told him that if he would put it so and so he would "fot it agate a riving". - The omission of the *is* I think an extension of the way in which we say "Father", "government" etc: they use it when there is a relative/in order to define. - They sae *frae* and *aboon*.

Hopkins's fascination with regional speech shows frequently in the journals and it was this loving egalitarian curiosity which led him to become a contributor to Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary*.

"Felix Randal" is shaped out of his attentive listening to Lancashire speech, and the gruff line "Ah well, God rest him all road ever he offended" is pitched out from the talk of mill-towns and Pennine villages. Anyone who enjoys the extremes of impulsive affection and vitality in regional speech is bound to notice that Hopkins's inner ear is awash with an infinite and exquisite sense of unique vocal patterns.

The history of the reception of Hopkins's verse shows that while some critics followed Palmer and objected to its "cumulative cacophony", others such as Leavis argued that Hopkins worked always in the spirit of "the living English language". Leavis insisted on Hopkins's central Englishness and although this accords with the poet's feisty patriotism ("a great work by an Englishman is like a great battle won by England", he remarked canonically to Bridges), it distorts the accepted notion of centrality. We no more expect Matthew Arnold to address us in a Lancashire accent than we imagine an actor playing Louis XIV speaking like Billy Connolly — the needs of a centralized State and expanding imperial markets dictate a single monolithic ruling voice and a language drained of natural stress patterns. And for all its displays of patriotic muscle, Hopkins's language issues from the ranks, not from the officer class. That language rips out of slums, backstreets, building sites, workshops and the "sheer clout" of rural drudgery.

Hopkins listened intently to demotic speech in Liverpool, Glasgow, Lancashire mill-towns, Wales, Dublin — by converting to Catholicism he made himself marginal to the power structure in Britain and merged his imagination with the proletariat's experience. His Catholic faith removed him from the self-defining solitudes of Protestant individualism and gave him a sense of solidarity with communal suffering. By rejecting his "national old Egyptian reed" — i.e., Anglicanism — he came to sympathize with the deprivations of powerless working-people:

My Liverpool and Glasgow experience laid upon my mind a conviction, a truly crushing conviction, of the misery of town life to the poor and more than to the poor, of the misery of poor in general, of the degradation even of our race, of the hollowness of this century's civilisation: it made even life a burden to me to have daily thrust upon me the things I saw.

This conviction of immersed poverty and the wild push of a popular revolutionary energy striding against the hegemony of Victorian England give Hopkins's poems their pouring, pellucid, "all in a rush" quality of hectic movement.

Despite his many reactionary outbursts Hopkins cannot simply be classed as a conservative writer. Like Dostoevsky he is forever

plunging his imagination into the destructive currents within the social moment. His imagination is drenched in the "rash smart slogging brine" – his image for history in that great Counter-Reformation poem, *The Wreck of the Deutschland*, where he draws on atavistic memories of the Thirty Years War in order to imagine a future Catholic victory over Protestantism. Thus Death's jocose drum-speed which opens the second part of the poem builds an image that resembles a seventeenth-century German woodcut and this military imagery is superimposed on a vision of the "wrecking" process which Hopkins, like Conrad, saw as central to nineteenth-century "civilization" – Bismarck's Germany and Victorian England especially. The link is made in Hopkins's remark to Bridges that English civilization "is in great measure founded on wrecking". His poem is a vision of imminent social catastrophe and in his famous "Red" letter to Bridges he justifies the working class's wish to "wreck and burn" a civilization founded on wrecking: "I am afraid some great revolution is not far off" he tells Bridges. "Horrible to say, in a manner I am a Communist."

If we accept that there is a link between the analytic political anxiety of the letters and Hopkins's poetry, then we can detect a revolutionary intoxication, an expressionist whap of pure energy, in the opening lines of "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the Comfort of the Resurrection":

Cloud-puffball, torn tufts, tossed pillows / flaunt
forth, then chey on an air-
built thoroughfare: heaven-roysters, in gay-gangs
they throng; they glitter in marches.
Down roughest, down dazzling whitewash,
wherever an elm arches,
Shivelights and shadowwack in long / lishes lace,
lance, and pair.
Delightfully the bright wind bolstered / ropes,
wreathes, boats carpl bare
Of yestertempest's creases; in pool and rutpel
parches
Squandering ooze to squeeze / dough, crust, dust
stanches, starches
Squadroned masks and manmarks / tremdriole there
Footfretted in it. Million-fueled, / nature's bonfire

Hopkins wrote these lines in Co Dublin in late July 1888 and rather like a Jack Yeats painting they enact the rainfresh swim of wind-driven Irish light (significantly the elmy shivelights play a Nash-like English light against the vernacular Irish whitewash). The crowded sense of consciousness expanding and some Miltonic echoes of the civil war in heaven – those gangs of roysters are drunk like the sons of Bellal – give a social edge and pressure to what is ostensibly a nature poem that modulates suddenly into an apocalyptic vision.

This rushed texture may have been prompted by the fact that Hopkins was writing in the aftermath of a particularly stressful moment in Anglo-Irish relations – the crisis of 1886-7 to which he responded with passionate sensitivity in his letters to Bridges. The tearing light and airy cavalry battalions in the poem enact the pressures of political crisis. No wonder, then, that the next poem Hopkins wrote was the rigidly metrical and sternly patriotic marching-song "What shall I do for the land that bred me". His discomfiting exposure to Irish nationalism understandably provoked him to write this carefully English nationalism.

Hopkins's acute political observation shows in these remarks which he made to Bridges more than a year before he wrote both poems.

Yesterday Archbishop Walsh had a letter in the *Free Press* enclosing a subscription to the defence of Dillon

and the other traversers on trial for presenting no Plan of Campaign and saying that the jury was packed and a fair trial impossible. The latter was his contribution to the cause of concord and civil order. Today Archbp. Croke has one proposing to pay no taxes. One archbishop backs robbery, the other is hellion; the people in good faith believe and will follow them: You will see, it is the beginning of the end.

Hopkins is living the social crisis of impending Home Rule or separation in "That Nature is Heraclitean Fire", though in suggesting this, am conscious that such a reading flies in the face of the apolitical consensus his critics share.

Four months later, in July 1887, Hopkins implored Bridges to influence people in England in order to bring them "to a just mind as to a proper resolution about Ireland". This letter came with the same "hurrying light" of "The

Nature is a Heraclitean Fire" and we need to read the poem with this passage vividly in mind:

recognize with me that with an unwavering will, or at least a flood of passion, on one, the Irish, side and a wavering one or indifference on the other, the English, and the Grand Old Mischiefmaker loose, like the Devil, for a little while and meddling and murring all the fiercer for his hurry. Home Rule is in fact likely to come and even, in spite of the crime, slaughter, and folly with which its advance is attended, may perhaps in itself be a measure of a sort of equity and considering that worse might be, of a kind of prudence.

The Grand Old Mischiefmaker is Gludstone and the imagery of heavenly havoc in the poem echoes Hopkins's view of him as a devilish and impetuous Home Ruler, all wind and wild light. Both the poem and the letter rework Milton's parliament of fallen angels with its "sound of blustering winds" and this enables Hopkins to give a new shimmer to the idea of political flux. The Heraclitean fire is a



metaphor for intense social crisis and it is unfortunate that an obsessive critical attention to Hopkins's aesthetic theories has dulled the readers' sense of cutting political edge of his imagination. Like Milton, the poet he most strongly identified with, Hopkins is the victim of an ahistorical literary criticism.

Although he detested Gladstone, Hopkins's imagination responds enthusiastically to those mass emotions which made Gladstone the great popular leader of the age. At times his response shows in a type of democratic or populist eroticism which has close affinities with Whitman's gay imagination, and he acknowledged this when he told Bridges "I always knew in my heart Walt Whitman's mind to be more like my own than any other man's living." He praised the "savagery" of Whitman's art and said his rhythm resembled his own verse in its "last ruggedness and decomposition into common prose". Like Whitman, he was devoted to raw, common speech and such devotion necessarily expresses a wide social viewpoint which regards unpracticable

quartz as being real gold, mined and minted by the people. This love of what Hopkins termed "tykishness" shows in an exchange of letters with Patmore where Hopkins corrects Patmore's misunderstanding of a remark he once made to the effect that Patmore the poet has less of the "tyke" in him than any man he knew.

As there is something of the "old Adam" in all the holiest men and in them at least enough to make them understand! In others, so there are old Adams of barbarism, boynishness, and unrefined in the reflexes, the irreparable, the unrefined in the reflexes, and educated. It is that that I meant by tykishness (tyke is a stray shy uncowned dog) and said you were nonsensical. I did also think that you were without sympathy for it and must survey it when you met me wholly from without. Ancient Pistol is the typical tyke, he and all his crew are tykos, and the tyke element undergoing dilution in Falstaff and Prince Henry V as king.

Tactfully Hopkins remarks: "I thought it well to have ever so little of it", and he concludes by praising Patmore's unrefined habit of smoking heavily because "to know one, yie

to a vice must help to humanise and make tolerant".

Hopkins's analysis of "tykishness" is a justification of his own poetic – according to the *OED* a "tyke" is also a low-bred boor and for all its sophisticated discipline Hopkins's verse aims often at a blurring boorishness and lack of refinement. We can detect in his fascinated definition of the word a reveling delight in a particular kind of yobbo populism and muscular brutality. It's as if deep down he wishes he were out on the rampage, like a crowd of Liverpool supporters or an SAS unit. His imagination pushes towards that condition of absolute war which Clausewitz defined as the blind explosion of force untrammelled by ideas.

If Hopkins resembles Kipling in his love of military muscle, he may also be seen as the English equivalent of Hugh MacDiarmid — both are provocative, unsettling poets whose synthetic demotic beats against a normative language of social control. Yet for all their polemical urgency they share a deep imaginative totalitarianism — MacDiarmid's praise of Lenin, Hopkins's creation of that hero of labour, Harry Ploughman, reveal a self-absorbed admiration for rigid order. Their imaginations share a risky, over-the-top extremism and a studied rejection of conventional notions of poetic taste.

Gerald Roberts's anthology of early Hopkins criticism is essential reading, though it is curious to notice that more than fifty years back only the young Elsie Duncan-Jones was disturbed by Hopkins's sometimes brutal eroticism — an aggressive attitude which helps produce those moments of deliberate bad taste in the verse. There are precedents in baroque art which might be cited in justification of the orgasmic stanza (28) in *The Wreck of the Deutschland* where Hopkins makes the toll nun's death resemble a combination of sexual intercourse and a cavalry charge: "Let him ride, her pride, in his triumph, despatch and have done with his doom there". Perhaps future critics will pay more attention to the element of camp baroque in Hopkins's art?

Future readers, though, will have problems with Catherine Phillips's new edition of the poems: it is a fussy and distracting text which ought not to replace Gardner and MacKenzie's fourth edition. Phillips's stated editorial practice is to adopt for text "the version which I believe to be that last written". As a result, many of the poems are pestered with metrical marks most of which Gardner and MacKenzie wisely relegated to the excellent and much fuller notes in their edition. Implying that she would have preferred to print the whole agonized gamut of curlicues, ties, outrides and double stresses, Phillips vulnerably remarks that "cost and editorial opinion" at Oxford University Press have restricted metrical marks in the text to simple stresses. Clearly there was some disagreement and the result is a botched compromise between minimal stress marks and the full range of markings. For the reader who is familiar with Gardner and MacKenzie's texts Phillips's over-marked replacements can grate on the aural vision. Also, the editorial technique of signalling note references with a balloon-like degree sign is distracting and unnecessary. The poems appear to be set in a field of pikes and soap bubbles.

Phillips's decision to choose the latest manuscript versions forces her to reject the A¹ text of "The Handsome Heart":

"But tell me, child, your choice: what shall I buy You?" - "Father, what you buy me I like best." With the sweetest air that smil'd, still plied and pressed, He swung to his first poised purport of reply.

What the heart is! which, like carriers let fly -
 Drift darkness, humming nature knows the rest -
 To its own fine function, wild and self-intrused,
 Tells light as ten years long taught how to and why

Mannerly-hearted! more than handsome face -
Beauty's bearing or muse of numbing vein.
All in this case, hushed in high hallowing grace.

Of heaven what boon to buy you, boy, or gain
Not granted? — Only . . . O on that path you pass
Run all your race; O brace sterner that strain!

This was the version chosen by Bridges, and Phillips rightly calls it "more lively"; however, she shunts it into the notes at the back of her edition and instead prints the B version:

"But tell me, child, your choice, / your fancy; what to buy
You?" – "Father, what you buy me / I shall like the
best".
With the sweetest earnest air / his purport, once
expressed,
Ever he swung to, push / what plea I might and ply?

Him. Ah, What the heart is! / Like carriers let fly –
Doff darkness: homing nature, / nature knows the
rest –
Heart to its own fine function, / wild and self-
instructed,
Falls as light as, life-long / schooled to what and why.

Heart manfully / is more than handsome face,
Beauty's bearing or / muse of mounting vein;
And what when, as in this case, / bathed in high
hallowing grace?

Of heaven then what boon / to buy you, boy, or gain?
Not granted? None but this, / all your road your race
To match and more than match / its sweet forestalling
strain.

Phillips justifies her decision to print this stam-
mering, inchoate wreck of a fine sonnet by
arguing that in 1883-4 Hopkins cancelled
Bridges's composite of the earlier versions.
Bridges felt that B had none of the "charm and
freshness" of A but his tender editorial care is
evident in the new edition.

Although minimal stress markings do create
a more accessible text, Hopkins's intervention-
ist scansion sometimes helps the ear receive the
unique and exact sound he wishes to deliver to

his readers. For example, I've been fascinated
for the past twenty years by these lines:

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day,
What hours, O what black hours we have spent
This night! what sights you, heart, saw; ways you
went!

A lot hangs on that unlaurel in the second line –
"black hours" – and to my ear the result is a
cavernous protracted Shakespearean guttural
that still survives in Ulster speech (Hopkins
comments on Ulster pronunciation in a letter to
Dixon). He wrote this tragic sonnet in Ire-
land and he seems to be rubbing his nose in that
ur-sound like a demented hellfire preacher ter-
rifying his congregation at the thought of
eternity and damnation. Phillips annoyingly
drops the unlaurel and prints: "What hours, O
what black hours we have spent." Stripped of
that terrible ululation the line becomes a bland
nine-syllabled nothing – like one of the Binsey
poplars its perfect inscape has been silenced.

Hopkins's readers must be grateful to Phil-
lips for printing the poems in chronological
order and for including, in this Oxford Authors
edition, a good selection from the journals.
However, her selection from the letters is in-
adequate – the "Red" letter is missing and so
too is the crucially important letter to A. W. M.
Baillie in which Hopkins doubts Tennyson and
discovers Parmenian. The ferocious and ex-
acting imagination of the Jesuit poet deserves a
more sensitive editor.

Misgiving

He didn't listen enough to music,
only four hours a day,
insufficient to close his wounds.

Instead, he turned injustice to a lyric,
words as vengeance on the cast,
those overpaid and much-imagined faces.

His great Last Period went missing
and nothing was quite right, just like
mad Schumann's Violin Concerto.

An only child, he knew instinctively
they listened to him, the Barbarossas
and Bellinis imprisoned in the womb.

Wanting his dissonance applauded
and his euphony able to raise tears,
he dry-farmed a modicum of silence.

Falling upwards in his gravity
he carried the children to a party,
guessing it would be busted by the cops.

A death preceded him and a life –
Mother and Wife had been preserved
in a wardrobe like two of Christie's girls.

Watching his cat fight for its life
on the X-Ray table, how could he think
his own end would be any easier?

Occasionally it was worth the cost
when a phrase in G Major struck out
and opened up its space to galaxies.

What might be taken was once freely given.
Phrases blew from books and special sounds
were coded for the unsuspecting ear.

So let him play like Timon on the sand
competing in his spite with his own voice
against an ostinato of the sea.

PETER PORTER

A form for emptiness

Robert Wells

DAVID CECIL
A Choice of Bridges's Verse
167pp. Faber. £9.95 (paperback, £4.95).
0571 138446

At the age of thirty-seven Robert Bridges gave
up his profession of medicine and retired, as
the late Lord David Cecil puts it in the intro-
duction to his new selection of the poems, "to
dedicate the rest of his long life to literature".
Bridges was a fluent writer. He lived till he was
eighty-five, and his *Poetical Works* (even in the
edition "excluding the eight dramas and *The*
Testament of Beauty") must be reckoned
among the more unwieldy relics in the Museum
of Literary Palaeontology. Reading him in
bulk, it is hard to put out of one's head C. H.
Sisson's characterization of him as a poet of
"impeccable lack of vitality". Like Swinburne
(seven years his senior) he gains greatly in
selection, since his better poems are clearly
detachable from the rest. Cecil's choice of
eighty or so is on the generous side, but it is
carefully considered and includes a handful of
which Yeats's estimate in his essay prefacing
the 1936 *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* still
seems persuasive: "words, often common-
place, made unforgettable by some trick of
speeding and slowing . . . every metaphor,
every thought a commonplace, emptiness
everywhere, the whole magnificent".

Cecil arranges the poems in sections accord-
ing to theme. This method has advantages with
Bridges. The variety of his styles, strikingly
emphasized by juxtaposition, reveals a surpris-
ing resourcefulness and definition in his work.
The disadvantage is that the relation of the
poems to the course of his life is suppressed.
Perhaps the most sustained of Bridges's
achievements is a group of seven poems in a
mild form of sprung rhythm, written between
1876 and 1880, after Gerard Manley Hopkins
had begun to send him his own experiments in
the metre and before he had ceased to work as
a doctor. Among the group are some of his
best-known anthology pieces, "A Passer-by",
"On a Dead Child", "The Voice of Nature",
and "London Snow", as well as the equally
impressive "The Downs" and the sonnet "I
would be a bird" – usually immured in the
sequence *The Growth of Love* – which takes off
from its Euripidean chorus-opening into an
arrogantly vivid dream of flight. In these
poems Hopkins is the reader over Bridges's
shoulder. The slight technical shift, the extra
touch of concentration, both in language and
power of observation, come from him. In their
investigations into poetic technique Hopkins
played Holmes to Bridges's Dr Watson. Bridges
was fascinated and appalled by his friend's
idiosyncratic methods. He recognized the
need for innovation but his own orthodoxy
went deep and, when left to himself, he set out
doggedly along what proved to be false trails –
the garrulous "neo-Miltonic syllables" or un-
workably pedantic experiments in quantitative
metre which absorbed him in later years.

Bridges always idealized poetry. It was not a
place in which to confront experience, unless
perhaps, is that "In Memory of Philip Arbut-
not Larkin, CH, OBE, 1922-85", which offers a
judicious mixture of homage and humour ("the
Order of Service says that he must suffer / this
non-stop non-extinction; any suffer / must
likewise live for ever . . ."). Death and imita-
tion come together again in "A Memorial Ser-
vice in a South London Crematorium", and
there is too an excellent parody of Kipling
("Intellectuals and reds that reads me books
turns pile / I'm especially vindictive in this
Mary Postgate title").

The "so-called sonnets" suggest that Ewart
would be a good turn on *Any Questions*, or
Any Answers, or anything. These apart, *Last*
Pickings will help us to digest the age as cheer-
fully as may be.

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"Pickings" is hardly the word. A cornucopia is
niggardly in comparison with Gavin Ewart,
whose sixth book of poems since the fat *Col-
lected* of 1980 this is. For sheer productivity, he
looks set to rival Hardy or Massfield. Critical
Caustics might as well stay at home, for he is
what he always was, and nothing the commen-
tators might dream up is going to deflect him
now.

Old age spurs him into many of these new
songs, and the deaths of friends and acquaint-
ances, and his irrepressible urge (shared by all
besotted readers, I imagine) to scribble paro-
dies and emendations down the margins of
literary history. The best of the elegies

the experience could be idealized too. For him
it represented that clear area which he needed
to protect from the soiling effect of the world.
Like the "splendid ship" in "A Passer-by" it
was "unhailed and nameless". Like the London
snow it was an "uncompacted lightness",
not yet trodden into "long brown paths". In a
couple of discursive poems about his early
childhood Bridges escapes his inhibition. "The
Summer-house on the Mound" is crowded with
engaging detail, recollections of the Duke of
Wellington and of Napier's ironclad fleet
steaming up the Channel. But the impression
persists that there is something at the heart of
Bridges's life which he could not (he was too
much of a gentleman) acknowledge or find a
language for, and which appears in his poetry
only as the generalized expression of a mel-
ancholy which is soon thrust away. "What led me
to poetry", he wrote, "was the inexhaustible
satisfaction of form, the magic of speech." Caught
between his desire for these and his horror of
the personal, he was a maker with nothing, or
almost nothing, to say. His true subject, as Yeats
implies, is emptiness; and the question which
opens the powerful poem "Eros", "Why hast thou
nothing in thy face?", echoes throughout his work.
Wanting distinction without substance, he seeks out
commonplaces and attempts to transform them.
No poet is more likely than Bridges to say that the
sky is blue and the grass green, or to rhyme
"hark!" with "lark". The risk is taken and the
failure is often palpable. He writes without
irony and his diction is unrepentantly late
Romantic. Set pieces like "Elegy among the
Tombs" and "Elegy on a Lady whom Grief for
the Death of her Betrothed Killed" are as
much of a task to read through now as their
titles suggest. But the successes, when they
come, can be near-perfect. "The evening dark-
ens over" looks forward to Auden in its light
musicality, while in "Nightingales" Bridges
takes the most hackneyed of themes and pro-
duces, in Keats's shadow, what is justly recog-
nized as his finest poem.

Is Sisson right about Bridges, or is Yeats? A
third judgment, that of Geoffrey Grigson, en-
compasses the other two. He includes Bridges
in his list – a distinguished one – of "wobblers",
those whose work is marked by "uncertain
walk, a declension from the firm, an extension
from the given or the gained into the
contrived". There is plenty of the contrived in
Bridges, much of it of stunning dullness, but an
arguable proportion of "the given or the
gained" can be found too. In this selection I
missed his touchingly plainspoken epigram on
old age "Who goes there?", but the only major
omission is "The Isle of Achilles", a fable in
which his lifelong dream of a paradisaic sec-
tion finds haunting expression. Cecil appar-
ently considered Bridges a great poet. This is
exactly what he is not. But he had the ability to
produce, very occasionally, verses which enter
the memory as soon as heard. His work will
continue to attract those in sympathy with his
idealizing habit of mind. For others he will
probably be a fair-weather friend among poets,
a graceful presence but not someone to go to
as Hopkins is – for truth-telling or when in
trouble.

Homage and humour

William Scammell

GAVIN EWART
Last Pickings
126pp. Hutchinson. Paperback, £5.95.
009 1882512

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niggardly in comparison with Gavin Ewart,
whose sixth book of poems since the fat *Col-
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An outstanding debt

Mary Lefkowitz

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS
*The Elgin Marbles: Should they be returned to
Greece?*
137pp. Chatto and Windus. £12.95.
07011 31632

The ancient Athenians would not have been
surprised that controversy still continues about
the elaborate building programme which they
began around 450 BC on their Acropolis. To
pay for new structures that would replace the
sanctuary destroyed by the Persians in 480,
they used the tribute exacted from their allies
for protection against future attacks by the
Persians. The morality of this decision was
questioned at the time, and understood by
some as a display of tyrannical behaviour by
the city that prided itself on its democracy. But
the programme went ahead, creating for the
world a disproportionate impression of the stature
and wealth of Athens. As the contem-
porary Athenian historian Thucydides observed,
an onlooker might easily conjecture from what
he saw that the city was twice as important as it
actually was.

The current debate concerns only some of
the sculptures that made the buildings so im-
pressive in their day; still more have been lost,
including the famous statue of Athena Polias
that stood on the Acropolis, and none of the
original colouring and gilding remains on what
survives. Again, despite their excellence, the
Parthenon marbles are not the only examples
of fine Greek sculpture from the mid-fifth cen-
tury; nor are those now in the British Museum
the only fine pieces to have been taken from
their original sites in Greece to be displayed in
Northern European cities. But because they
are Athenian, with all that Athens has come to
represent, the presence in England of the Elgin
marbles has generated bitter controversy.

From the beginning, questions have been

raised about both the propriety of keeping
them on foreign soil, and the manner in which
they were acquired. Even as Lord Elgin's men
were hacking the sculptures off the Parthenon
with an ordinary saw, there were impassioned
protests – though only a few observers, like
Lord Byron, concentrated on the central moral
issue of whether it was right to take Greek
works of art away from Greece. He compared
Elgin to the notorious Verres, the Roman gov-
ernor who in 73 BC ransacked Sicily, and noted
that the Greeks themselves (whose opinion
few others apparently had sought) felt that
Elgin had ruined Athens. Others complained,
though usually with less laudable motives. The
French would have preferred to get the sculp-
tures for themselves; so would some British
travellers who wanted them for their own col-
lections; the Turks who then governed Athens
expressed regrets, but only when they saw the
Marbles being damaged in the process of re-
moval, or after they had been taken away.

The practice of using ancient sites as quar-
ries, either for treasure or for prefabricated
building material, had been established in anti-
quity. In 146 BC the Roman general Mum-
mius, before razing Corinth – a city more
wealthy and important at the time than Athens
– took its best art treasures to Rome, while giv-
ing the less valuable works to his ally Attalus,
King of Pergamum, where they could still be
seen three centuries later. The moral code of
Christianity brought no improvement: in 325
AD, under the auspices of Constantine, then
Emperor of Rome, treasures from all over the
Greco-Roman world were brought to adorn his
new capital at Byzantium, including (in the
hippodrome) the bronze monument dedicated
at Delphi by the Greek cities who defeated the
Persians at Plataea in 479 BC. Few ancient con-
querors expressed concern about the original
intentions of the artists or patrons whose works
they removed for new purposes of their own.

As governments changed and centres of
population shifted, the Parthenon sculptures
seem to have remained in place because the

building which they adorned remained in use.
Although the temple had been put in order to
honour both the goddess Athena and the city
she protected, from the fifth century AD until
1458 the Parthenon had been used, perhaps
not inappropriately, as the *Church of Holy*
Wisdom. Then under Ottoman rule it became
a mosque for the soldiers garrisoned on the
Acropolis, while the temple of Athena and
Poseidon known as the Erechtheum was used
as a harem for their commander. But the
Parthenon was damaged severely and irrepar-
ably in 1687, when the Venetians besieged the
Turks on the Acropolis: a mortar bomb ignited
the gunpowder that had been stored in the
mosque, whose roof and ornament had for so
many centuries remained intact. More damage
and loss occurred during the eighteenth cen-
tury, when seven slabs of the remaining frieze
disappeared; by 1800 only four of the original
twelve figures remained on the West Pedit-
ment.

The removal, starting in 1802, of most of the
remaining sculptures under the auspices of
Lord Elgin thus initiated only the third phase in
the building's ruin. A fourth phase, no less
deadly because unintentional, did not begin
until after the Second War, when, as the popu-
lation of Athens dramatically increased,
smog from heating oil and automobile exhausts
slowly but inexorably started to turn marble
building blocks into gypsum powder.

It was a unique combination of circum-
stances which enabled Lord Elgin, rather than
anyone else, to remove the sculptures that had
not been destroyed in the Venetian bombard-
ment. As Ambassador to the Sublime Porte in
Constantinople, he had set out initially to bring
back drawings and moulds of ancient sculp-
tures; but he was soon, and perhaps too easily,
persuaded that he should seek permission to
take away any sculptures and inscriptions that
happened to have fallen down, to protect them
from being misused or destroyed. There was
also the possibility that they might make their
way into the hands of rivals. The French collec-

tor Fauvel, who was in Athens at the time, had
been told in 1783 by his employer Count
Choiseul-Gouffier, the French ambassador to
the Porte: "take everything you can; lose no
chance to snatch everything that can be
snatched in Athens and vicinity; spare neither
the living nor the dead". Since the Turks were
at war with France, Fauvel was only able to obtain a
few pieces of sculpture from the Parthenon,
which are now in the Louvre.

Against this background, it is not difficult to
understand why the Turks allowed Elgin's men
to remove sculptures that had not fallen from
the building. The military governor of Athens
had been liberally rewarded, and they were at
the time eager to please the English. If certain
officials later protested that Elgin had gone too
far, at the time they did nothing to stop him,
though they had ample opportunity. The re-
moval of the sculptures began in April, but the
first cases did not leave the Piraeus until De-
cember 1802. From May 1803 until 1809 forty
cases waited in the Piraeus while England was
at war with France and then with Turkey. A
second set of sculptures (including one
Caryatid from the Porch of the Erechtheum)
obtained by Elgin's resident artist Lusieri while
Elgin was a prisoner of war in France, did not
leave Greece until 1810; and a final set of five
basses left only in 1811, this last group accom-
panied not only by Lusieri but by Lord Byron
himself.

Meanwhile, Elgin had realized that he must
sell, rather than give the sculptures to the na-
tion, or indeed keep them to use in his own
house, as he once had imagined might be pos-
sible. But the £35,000 awarded to him in 1816 by
Parliament after protracted negotiations bare-
ly covered half of what he claimed to have
spent. He returned to the House of Lords in
1820, and the following year joined his critic
Byron in subscribing to the Philhellenic Com-
mittee's support of the Revolutionary Forces
in Greece, but eventually he was forced to take
refuge from his creditors in France, where he

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died in 1841.

The Marbles, it would seem, like the robe and necklace in the myth of Amphiaras, have brought troubles to all connected with them; first to the Athenians who, after losing the war against Sparta, were never again an important power in Ancient Greece; then to the Turks who were driven out of Athens in the Revolution. Then, as Byron observed in his scathing poem, *The Curse of Minerva*, the goddess's wrath struck Elgin's family, who were ruined financially. The British nation has since kept them on public display, only to be accused of crimes ranging from neglect to imperialism and robbery. Will the troubles stop if they are returned to Greece?

A detailed history of the Marbles was written for the centenary of their acquisition, when the scholarly periodical *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* published a long, carefully documented article by the then Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities in the British Museum, A. H. Smith, a relative of the Elgins who had access to family records. The evidence (including family records) was more recently reviewed by William St Clair, in a comprehensive and dispassionate general account, *Lord Elgin and the Marbles* (1967); St Clair praises the "extremely thorough and accurate" work by Smith. There is also an excellent illustrated guide-book by the present Keeper, B. F. Cook.

Now Christopher Hitchens has written yet another account, intended for the general reader, *The Elgin Marbles: Should they be returned to Greece?* The book is prefaced by a brief sympathetic account by Robert Browning, "The Parthenon in History", which does not mention that it was built with money diverted from the Delian League. As an epilogue, there is an interesting account of past and present attempts at restoration, written by Graham Binns, Deputy Chairman of the British Committee for the Restitution of the Elgin Marbles. Attractively illustrated, the book even includes (to elicit the support of American readers?) a photograph of that remarkably sturdy structure, the Nashville Parthenon, comfortably sitting in its grassy park.

Since Hitchens is not an archaeologist or a historian, it would be unfair to expect him to offer more than a forceful argument for the Marbles' return. His account, as might be expected, implies that Lord Elgin was little better than a pirate; he dismisses as puritanism the ancient outcry against Pericles' use of the Delian treasury to fund his building programme, an action that if committed nowadays would have raised as much of a public storm as Iran-gate. He emphasizes the philistinism and amateurism of Elgin and his employees, for which there is no lack of evidence; for example, apparently as the result of overloading, the brig Mentor sank off Kythera with seventeen cases of moulds and sculptures, though these were eventually recovered.

The book makes Elgin's actions appear unique, and therefore more reprehensible, by omitting to set them in their cultural context: after all, many other collectors at the time were eagerly removing whatever Grecian antiquities they could get. The fine archaic pedimental sculptures from the temple of Aphaia in Aegina now in Munich, for example, were bought from their excavators by King Ludwig of Bavaria. Certainly, as an appendix to the book shows, about half of the extant Parthenon sculptures are now in the British Museum; but there are fragments also in Copenhagen, Würzburg, Vienna and Paris (the rest remain in Athens). Hitchens plays down the Turks' apathy by omitting to mention explicitly how long the removals took, and how it might have been possible for them at any time over several years to impound the boxes of sculptures while they were waiting to be shipped from the Piraeus.

Generally, he has little sympathy for Elgin or other members of what he calls the "collecting class", and whenever possible suggests that Elgin and his followers, including all who have since, however ineptly, advocated the Marbles' retention, were motivated by politics or class prejudice. In order to cast doubt on A. H. Smith's objectivity, Hitchens notes that he failed to include this sentence in a quotation from a letter in which Elgin tried to assure Perceval, the Prime Minister, that he had obtained no special favours from the Turks:

And on Mr Achir's being officially instructed to apply in my favour, he understood, "The Porte denied that the persons who had sold those marbles to me had any right to dispose of them".

This, Hitchens claims, reveals that Elgin admitted that he knew he had acquired the Marbles without permission. But one could equally well argue that Smith omitted this sentence simply because it provides only hearsay evidence for what he already had shown: how the Porte (like the magistrates in his service in Athens) was always ready after the fact to deny what it had done.

If no significant new ethical or factual reasons can be produced, why consider returning the Marbles at the present time? The best



Hellenistic copy of the Diadumenos (athlete binding on the fillet of victory) by Polykleitos, one of several sculptures of the second century BC recovered from a private house on Delos, and testifying to the beginnings of art-collecting.

reason, as Christopher Hitchens and his colleagues suggest, is the possibility (not to be realized until 1996) that the Greek Archaeological Service could eventually house them in a new museum near the Acropolis, where they would be as well or better displayed than at present. But such an arrangement would merely transfer the sculptures from one museum to another. Onlookers would still need to transfer them in imagination to their original setting. Because of the stifling cloud of smog that hangs over modern Athens, we cannot hope that the sculptures will be able to "breathe" again on Attic soil, or to be seen in the dazzling light for which they were designed.

What, then, would be gained by their return? From the point of view of the art historian, relatively little, even assuming that all the extant fragments of Parthenon sculptures from all museums, not just the Elgin Marbles, could be returned; though it is true that if all the evidence for the Acropolis site were collected in one place, we could more easily grasp their theme—how the sculptures from both the present Parthenon and its destroyed predecessor show the triumph of order over chaos. Education of this sort, rather than simple cultural nationalism, offers the best motive for restoring to Greece the Elgin Marbles. The problem lies, notoriously, in separating this motive from arguments for returning all other unique works of art, like the pedimental sculptures from the temple of Aphaia now in Munich, the Winged Victory of Samothrace now in the Louvre, not to mention some of the magnificent vases that were originally made in Greece but exported even in antiquity to the Western Mediterranean. For if what is at stake is education, every one of these treasures, whenever they were removed from Greek soil, and however far from their roots they have travelled, have for more than two millennia been representing ancient Greek civilization to the rest of us; without them, our art and architecture would have been less significant, and Western Europe would be less aware of our lasting debt to the ancient Greeks.

Gifts of the sultan

Godfrey Goodwin

CENGİZ KOSEOGLU
Topkapi: The treasury
Translated and edited by J. M. Rogers
215pp. Thames and Hudson. £70.
0 500 01412 4

The Topkapi Saray collection was never a static one, and some of it was kept in subsidiary depots in Ottoman times. Many pieces were intended to be gifts from the sultan, as, for example, those made for Nadir Shah who was assassinated before they could be delivered. So nearly half the items illustrated in this third volume of five on aspects of the Topkapi Saray and its collections are European, Indian or Chinese in origin although embellished in Istanbul. The 124 plates present a selection of the better-known treasures which are displayed in the magnificent pavilion originally built for Mehmed II. Individual gems are the potentates of the collection; cabochon emeralds and rubies have modulated depths of colour that no faceted stone, with superficial fire masking the inward glow, can match.

The collection was built up haphazardly. No registers were kept until the discovery in 1680 of pilferage by a deceased grand vizier. Sadly, most early items have disappeared, dispersed as gifts or melted down. Before the nineteenth

century, therefore, it does not reflect the personal tastes of the sultans. Although Süleyman the Magnificent grew powerful enough to disclaim tradition, the cult of royalty required that objects handled by the sultan should be adorned with gems, including his turban (and sometimes even his beard). This is why the collection leaves an overwhelming impression of the barbaric opulence which hedges kings, Asian and European alike.

The notes to the plates and the text sustain the high standard of scholarship set by the earlier volumes and justify the care lavished on photographing both masterpieces and baubles such as the insignia of the order of King Carol of Romania.

Sections cover the history of the Treasury, its additions and subtractions, and its documentation. Research into the identity and provenance of anonymous Ottoman craftsmen and their techniques has proved to be invaluable. The travels of the arm of John the Baptist and other Christian relics are wittily described. The discussion of Chronomania amusingly illustrates how the Ottomans continued the Byzantine court's delight in automata. Even if the gold peacock studded with emeralds listed in 1680 no longer exists, there are toys from Fabergé's workshop. The case of an Augsburg clock cresting the baldaquin of Ahmad II's throne is a delight; it is a nicely Ottoman touch that, though the entrails were discarded, nothing was wasted.

Provincial painterly

Cyril Mango

DOULA MOURIKI
The Mosaics of Nea Moni on Chios
Translated by Richard Burgi
Two volumes, 280pp; 119 colour and 124 black-and-white plates. Athens: Commercial Bank of Greece.

The monasteries of Hosios Loukas, Nea Moni and Daphni contain the three great mosaic ensembles of medieval Greece. Of the three, only Nea Moni is adequately documented: built and decorated c1050–55, it was a foundation of the jovial Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos and one that continued to enjoy imperial support and liberality for the next three hundred years. Nothing is known for certain about the circumstances of construction or the exact date of Hosios Loukas and Daphni, although scholarly opinion is fairly unanimous in placing the former in the first half of the eleventh century and the latter towards its close.

Nea Moni offers, therefore, a convenient starting-point for the study of its "sister" monuments and, indeed, of Byzantine monumental painting in one of its greatest periods. The mosaics in question, partly destroyed by the earthquake of 1881, have been known to scholars for nearly a hundred years, but this is the first time that they have been published and discussed in full following Charalambos Bouras's earlier book on the architecture of Nea Moni (English edition 1982). Doula Mouriki has done an outstanding job. She has written a detailed description not neglecting technical data (the latter in collaboration with Ernest Hawkins) and including a thorough discussion of iconography and style. In short, she has provided all the elements for an assessment of Nea Moni both in itself and in a broader context.

At the end of her meticulous analysis Professor Mouriki comes to postulate three successive styles of painting that were current in eleventh-century Byzantium: the "linear hierarchy", represented by Hosios Loukas (which she dates in the 1030s) and, in a less pure form, by St Sophia, Kiev; the "painterly" of Nea Moni, which finds analogies in St Sophia, Ohrid (of about the middle of the century), and St Nicholas "of the Roof" at Kakopetria (Cyprus); and the "classical" at Daphni, with contemporary parallels in Cyprus and Georgia. All of these styles are said to have originated in Constantinople, where, unfortunately, practically no wall-painting of this period survives. "Painterly" is indeed an appropriate term to describe the mosaics of Nea Moni, which are

outlined than on blocks of colour, sometimes without contours. Granted the supposition that the artists came from Constantinople, is one then to believe that Nea Moni offers a representative sample of the state of the art in the capital in c1050?

The mosaics do have undeniable qualities of dramatic intensity, and many individual figures are sensitively done. In looking more attentively at the narrative representations, however, one is struck by faults of drawing and a clumsiness of execution that one would not normally associate with metropolitan standards. In the well-known Anastasis, Adam has two right hands and David is lacking a left arm. The Baptism shows a complete disregard for the relative scale of figures. The three sleeping apostles in the scene of the Agony in the Garden can only be described as grotesque, Peter having only one leg and appearing to be attached to the truncated torso of his two companions. The apostles in the Washing of the Feet lack various parts of their anatomy and those of the Pentecost are particularly ill drawn. Of course provincial workmanship is not the only explanation for the presence of such faults. Not all Constantinopolitan artists were equally gifted; the atelier that went to Chios may not have been of the best. In addition to poor drawing, however, one senses a certain inexperience, as if the artists were trying to improvise *ad hoc* solutions and not quite succeeding—the same, incidentally, has been observed concerning the building by Bouras. For example, finding themselves with an expanse of empty space above the Washing of the Feet, the artists of Nea Moni filled it with a kind of portico of twisted columns between which the figure of Christ is repeated three times. First he removes his outer garment (himation), which is shown discarded, clinging to one of the columns; then he girds himself with a towel, then pours water into a basin. No parallel appears to be known and the sequence could not have been visually attractive even when it was complete (today the upper portion is missing). To make matters worse, the colour of Christ's lower garment (chiton) changes from one figure to the next and when we come to the Washing of the Feet, Christ is once again wearing the himation which he had taken off.

One may ascribe such infelicities to sheer incompetence or to the mechanical reproduction of small-scale models in illuminated manuscripts. On the other hand, they may indicate a moment of change when Byzantine artists were taking a faltering step in a new direction for which they were not as yet fully prepared. It will be easier to make an informed judgement when the mosaics and frescoes of Hosios Loukas and Daphni have been published as fully and

Likeness and likelihood

Malcolm Rogers

ROY STRONG
The portraits of Queen Elizabeth I
180pp, with 4 colour and 189 black-and-white illustrations. Thames and Hudson. £18.
0 500 25098 7

In 1963 Roy Strong published his *Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, in which he attempted a complete listing of the authentic portraits of the queen in all media, together with a classification of the painted portraits by face-pattern, rather than, as had previously been the case, by costume. The present book grows out of that earlier work, and indeed whole sections of the lengthy introduction are reprinted from it. It is, however, very different. Sir Roy writes of his previous study: "Over twenty years on, this approach of cataloguing every version and variant of each image... seems sterile. What suggests itself to me as infinitely more revealing is a considered and detailed analysis of the major portraits or groups of portraits as this fantastic iconography was slowly built up over half a century." Instead of a catalogue Strong therefore presents twenty-four short chapters (some digested from his earlier books), each dealing with a single portrait or group of portraits. The arrangement is chronological, and the chapters copiously illustrated.

As is now habitual, Strong approaches the

portraits of the queen as "cult" images, and he is most at home and, indeed, most rewarding when imaginatively recreating the symbolic resonance which these images had for those who first devised them. The sections on the "Rainbow" and "Ermine" portraits at Hatfield are outstanding in this respect. However, few apart from Strong himself would think of describing his approach as "considered and detailed", and more often we sense the excited flow of his ideas drawing him away from close analysis of the portrait he is ostensibly considering. This is especially obvious in the case of the "Ditchley" portrait by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (National Portrait Gallery), painted probably in 1592 for Sir Henry Lee to commemorate the queen's reconciliatory visit to his house at Ditchley in Oxfordshire. It is painted according to a symbolic programme almost certainly of Lee's devising, and expounded in three Latin mottoes and an English sonnet inscribed on it. The mottoes are now damaged, but may be read; the sonnet is fragmentary, but with the aid of its rhythm and rhyme-scheme and its heavy reliance on repetition and parallelism may be almost entirely reconstructed. Strong's account of the inscriptions is inaccurate and perfunctory; he does not attempt a reconstruction of the sonnet, or even translate the Latin tags. In other words, he ignores the major statements of the portrait's theme, while, in the space of a chapter of four and a half pages, devoting one and a half pages to the symbolic

significance of the queen's ear-ring.

In many instances his material is not fully digested. The so-called "Siege" portraits, showing the queen holding a sieve, emblem of the Roman vestal virgin Tuccia, are a case in point. The most elaborate of these is in Siena, a painting which Strong persuasively attributes to the Dutch artist Cornelius Ketel, who was in England between 1573 and 1581. He dates the Siena picture to between 1579 and 1581, that is, after a group of much less sophisticated "Siege" portraits dated 1579, which he attributes to the native artist George Gower. The Siena picture has in the background a little group of courtiers, one of whom bears on his sleeve the device of a white hind. This allows Strong to identify him as a favourite of the queen, Sir Christopher Hatton. The earliest account we have of Ketel's career records that the artist was patronized by Hatton, and that in 1578 he painted the queen. It would therefore seem safe to hypothesize that the Siena picture may well have been painted for Hatton in or about 1578, months after he was knighted by the queen, in the year of his appointment as Vice-Chamberlain. This was also the year in which George Best's *True Discourse* of the voyages of Sir Martin Frobisher (who sat to Ketel in 1578) were published with a dedication to Hatton: a book which, Strong argues, influenced the imperial symbolism of the portrait. It follows from this that the portraits dated 1579 are not precursors but derivatives of the Siena picture, as indeed their quality would suggest.

It is worth taking this analysis a little further, for it shows the way in which Strong's confident hypotheses unravel under close scrutiny. All the evidence would make it likely that Ketel, with the support of a favourite of the queen, would have received a sitting for this important and highly original work. If, however, Strong is correct, the face-mask of the Siena picture actually derives in reverse via the 1579 paintings from the "Darnley" portrait in the National Portrait Gallery, a work which he attributes

matter needs investigation, but a better response might be that a similar influence did occur in English painting, although not in the portraits of aristocratic "ancestors" sold by Joseph Duveen to a generation of American tycoons, which comprise the author's frame of reference. To ask such a question at all implies a shameful neglect of recent scholarship devoted to English art, leading to a further question: how worthwhile is any comparative analysis, especially one which attempts to distinguish the art of a colony from that of the mother country, when only half of the comparison has been seriously attended to?

Colonial American Portraiture begins with a chapter on "The Legacy of John Calvin", and it ends with an epilogue, "Peale's Portrait of Benjamin Franklin", which is more about Franklin than about Peale. Seventeenth and eighteenth-century New England, which properly receives the lion's share of attention in the book, was shaped by its Calvinist-Puritan heritage, and Craven's history of American art during these centuries is essentially an attempt to define this distinctive, but evolving, cultural milieu and explain the paintings by relating them to it. At times the relation (or absence thereof) is rigidly deterministic: it was "beyond possibility" for John Smibert "to create the ultimate New England mercantile portrait because he was foreign-born and foreign-trained, and therefore was not himself a product of colonial America" (one wonders how Craven would assess the English careers of such foreign-born and foreign-trained artists as Van Dyck and Sargent). At times the relation is a matter of choice or intention: seventeenth-century portraits were painted "in the conservative, subconsciously nationalistic style espoused by upper-middle-class mercantile and gentry society", and "all were intended to express... the same socio-cultural values of the upper-middle-class Protestant community". There are large (and seemingly unquestioned) assumptions behind such assertions, and in his preface Professor Craven makes at large claims for what he is setting out to do. He bridges at flaws in art-historical methodology in previous studies of early American portraiture, but inherent problems in his own methodology, added to his somewhat blinkered view of the wider art-historical context, keep many of the main arguments of *Colonial American Portraiture* from being entirely convincing. None the less, as the only comprehensive and up-to-date study of its subject, the book makes available a corpus of historically significant, frequently fascinating, and occasionally beautiful works of art, and it provides a vast amount of highly relevant background information.

In 1765 John Singleton Copley, working in isolation in colonial Boston, sent his "Boy with a Squirrel", one of the quintessential masterpieces of his early style, to London in the hope of eliciting some critical response from the established artists of the metropolis. The picture was enthusiastically received and Copley was elected in *absentia* a member of the Society of Artists, but the first response to the painting when it was sent to Reynolds's studio without Copley's name attached was that it was by a young Englishman, Joseph Wright of Derby. This mistake was not an aberration peculiar to 1765; according to Benedict Nicolson's catalogue of Wright's *oeuvre*, at least two portraits by Wright entered major American museums in this century bearing false attributions to Copley. One reason for the confusion of the artists' works is, as Nicolson wrote in 1968, that both Copley in Boston and his contemporary Wright in Liverpool and Derby painted "sitters of the same up-and-coming middle class, who demanded a similar realistic treatment".

In this ambitious book, Wayne Craven addresses the central issues implied by his subtitle, and points out sensitively and at some length how portraits painted in Puritan, middle-class, colonial New England by Copley and other artists differ substantially from earlier and contemporary images of the English aristocracy painted by leading artists in London. From Lely to Reynolds and Gainsborough. Yet, oddly, Wright of Derby is not mentioned once, and what should be interesting questions about differences between colonial and provincial art, reflecting the different societies of eighteenth-century Boston and eighteenth-century Liverpool, are never raised. Professor Craven does, however, ask (in a chapter entitled "Philosophers and Scientists", which discusses American artists' interest in the physical world in relation to seventeenth and eighteenth-century British empiricism), "if the thought and writings of Locke and Newton contributed to the development of the style of a colonial American painter, why did a similar influence not occur in eighteenth-century English painting—in, say, the work of Sir Joshua Reynolds or Thomas Gainsborough?" Craven modestly answers himself by saying that the

to the Italian Mannerist artist Federico Zuccaro, who drew, and perhaps painted, the queen in 1575. In reality the Portrait Gallery picture, with its blanched face and stiff articulation, bears only a faint resemblance to Zuccaro's drawing (British Museum), with its expressive features and elaborate allegorical accessories, and is redolent of the North. Further research may show what everything else suggests: that it is another portrait of Elizabeth from the later 1570s, perhaps by Ketel.

Elsewhere Strong glosses over the problems of attribution in a period where few portraits are documented and many damaged to the extent that they provide unreliable visual evidence. The three-quarter length of c1565–70 (private collection), here attributed to Steven van der Meulen (whose name is misspelled "Muellen" throughout), is perhaps by Arnold van Brouckhorst, an artist whom Strong consistently undervalues, shortly after his arrival in England. Any discussion of "Queen Elizabeth and the Three Goddesses" (Royal Collection), which carries the monogram "HE" and the date 1569, ought at least to consider the old attribution to Hans Eworth and the picture's relationship to that artist's "Wise and Foolish Virgins" (Copenhagen), somewhat similarly initialed and dated 1570, before rejecting this in favour of Joris Hoefnagel, with the speculation (unsupported by technical examination) that the monogram may have originally read "JHF". Few would accept Strong's attribution of the "Procession Picture" (private collection) to Robert Penke, first made in 1969, and which he disingenuously describes as "unchallenged". That such an attribution should remain unchallenged underlines the fact that the portraits of Elizabeth are, as they have long been, virtually Sir Roy's private scholarly domain. It is to be hoped that the obviously controversial aspects of this study will stimulate others to enter the field, and, like Sir Roy Strong in 1963, and bearing the rich fruits of his researches in mind, take the study of Elizabeth's portraits back to first principles.

American Journals

Albert Camus

CAMUS

ON NEW YORK, BRAZIL, AND THE HUMAN CONDITION

The Nobel Prize winner Albert Camus was never more unreservedly himself than in the series of personal notebooks which he kept from 1935 until his death 26 years later. Especially revealing and rewarding are the *American Journals*, which chronicle his travels in the U.S. and Brazil between 1940 and 1961, when he was at the pinnacle of success. With an introduction by Camus' long-time editor Roger Quilliot, they comprise a valuable legacy from the man often called "the conscience of our time", enriching and clarifying the body of his timeless work.

Now at bookstores: Hardcover \$15.95

PARAGON HOUSE
NEW YORK

Richer and stronger

W. G. Beasley

SIRANON H. NOITE

Liberalism in Modern Japan: Ishibashi Tanzen and his teachers, 1905-1960
378pp. University of California Press. £29.25, 0520057074

MICHAEL A. BARNHART

Japan Prepares for Total War: The search for economic security, 1919-1941
290pp. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. \$32.95, 0801419158

LESLEY CONNORS

The Emperor's Adviser: Saionji Kinmochi and pre-war Japanese politics
260pp. Croom Helm. £29.95, 0709934491

It is usual to date the modern development of Japan from a period of conflict with the West in the middle of the nineteenth century. Fear of Western imperialism at that time contributed to the emergence of new political leaders, who during the reign of the Meiji emperor (1867-1912) set out to achieve national strength, politically, militarily and economically, through an extensive programme of borrowing Western technology and institutions. Their aims were summarized in the slogan *fukoku-kyohai*, "enrich the country, strengthen the military". There were two corollaries. One was that Japan, starting from a position of weakness, must seek equality, whether in trade or empire-building, within an international framework which the West had devised and continued to dominate: to be an international maverick was beyond Japan's immediate or foreseeable capacity. The second was that Japan must have an authoritarian polity, capable both of enforcing the decisions which such aims made necessary and of maintaining in power the men who took them. These were the central features of what one might call the Meiji settlement. Any substantial attempt to reform Japanese society after about 1900 would involve modifying or rejecting them. The books reviewed here are concerned with two such challenges, one to the internal and one to the external policies that had been established in Meiji Japan.

These challenges occurred as a result of the economic and social changes brought about by Meiji policy itself. During the first two decades of the twentieth century Japan was rapidly putting together the ingredients of what contemporaries recognized as a "social problem" deriving from industrialization: a professional and managerial middle class which had only limited opportunities for participation in politics; a factory labour force, whose aspirations and nascent union organization did not easily fit into established modes; rapid urbanization, involving displacement to the towns of many who had been brought up as country people, and bringing the first evidence of slum development; a rural population increasingly divided between tenant farmers and absentee landlords. Governments saw these things, and the tensions they provoked, as threats to the good order on which national strength depended. Their opponents regarded them as problems to be solved, or as proof that the policies of modernization had themselves been misconceived.

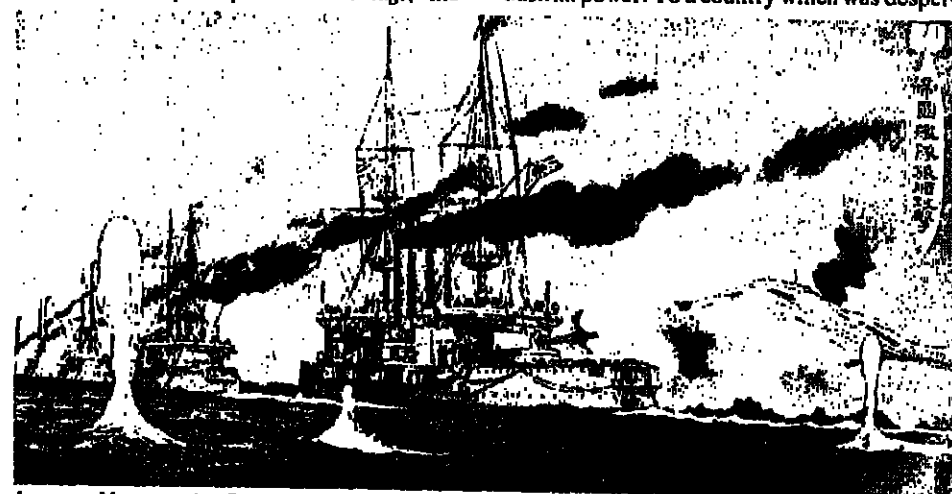
Among the latter many were "liberals", that is, men and women who accepted the main thrust of the policies and institutions conceived under Meiji, but sought within them to provide a broader base for political activity, as well as some amelioration in the living conditions of the underprivileged. It is these whom Sharon Nolte studies. She takes as her principal focus Ishibashi Tanzen (1884-1973), pre-war economic journalist and post-war politician, plus two men, Tanaka Oku and Shimamura Hogeisui, who had taught him at Waseda University.

The choice of a university connection is not ungenerally academic prejudice. It was a characteristic of the years between 1900 and 1910 that Japan's education system was expanding at the secondary and higher levels, thereby increasing the numbers of those who were literate, politically aware and in some measure disillusioned (because the material benefits to be derived from education were proving harder to secure than optimism had suggested). In other words, the country was acquiring an intellectual class. Books and journals were being pro-

duced for its members to read. In particular, there now appeared a range of semi-popular periodicals (many of which still exist) as vehicles for the public discussion of issues that were current and controversial: the nature of democracy; the place of women in the family and society; individualism; the social function of literature; tradition and the need for a "modern" ethic.

Ishibashi, Tanaka and Shimamura all wrote regularly for such publications. Their articles, together with Ishibashi's editorials and diary, provide the substance of Professor Nolte's book. Ishibashi wrote as a staff member for Japan's leading economic journal, *Toyo Keizai Shimpō*, founded in 1895 on the model of Britain's *Economist*. He became editor-in-chief in 1924; started an English-language version, the *Oriental Economist*, in 1932; and only severed his connection with the paper after 1945, when he entered politics.

As an economic journalist Ishibashi had a distinctive contribution to make to Japanese liberalism. Like others, he argued for women to take a more prominent part in public life, for ideas about the family to be revised in the light of the needs of industrial society, for politics to be based on the principle of *minshushugi*, "the



Japanese Navy opening fire on the Russians in 1904.

people-as-master". What Japan required, he said, was no longer the welding of national unity, since wealth and strength had substantially been achieved. Rather, the people must be given greater liberty of expression, and society's efforts devoted more to wealth than strength. It was only the growth of industry and commerce that would make a better future possible. Among other things, this meant freeing business men (for, whom, after all, Ishibashi chiefly wrote in his professional capacity) from the dead hand of bureaucratic conservatism.

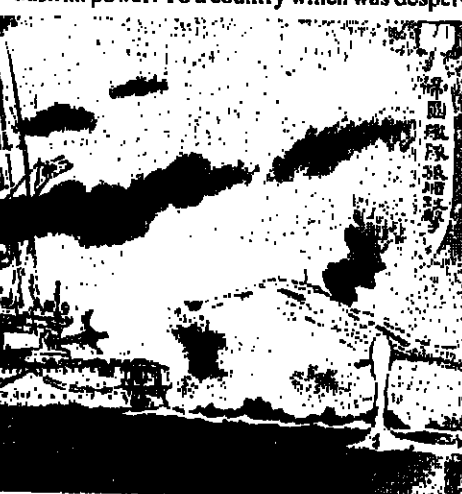
In dealing with questions about Japan's relations with the rest of the world Ishibashi was a Free Trader, convinced not only that Japan was constrained to accept Anglo-American ground rules in commerce and finance, but also that it had the qualities to succeed in competition with those powers. This led him to criticize Japan's overseas empire as being economically irrelevant, as well as unjust. Far from contributing to defence, he claimed, colonies made it necessary. The cost of acquiring and keeping them was a drain on the economy. Moreover, the actions by which Japanese interests were advanced on the Asian mainland aroused foreign hostility, which then became a barrier to trade. "What I particularly fear", he wrote at the time of the Siberian expedition, "is making enemies of our neighbours, the one hundred and fifty million people of China and Russia, by our reckless dispatch of troops."

In voicing opinions of this kind Ishibashi did not wholly contradict those of Japan's political establishment. Senior statesmen like Inoue Kaoru and Shidehara Kijuro went along with the argument that military adventures in China were to Japan's economic disadvantage, though they did not go so far as to condemn colonies in Korea and Taiwan, or a sphere of influence in Manchuria, as Ishibashi did. By the same token, Ishibashi accepted that Japan must be strong, differing from the older generation of Japanese leaders principally in the means he wished to see adopted to that end.

When one turns to those who attacked the established foreign policy from the opposite point of view, that is, accusing its advocates of weakness, one is dealing with something more than differences of emphasis of this kind. Men who were more impressed by strength than

wealth and saw it as the proper task of government to exploit the country's military potential resented what they considered to be Japan's subservience to Britain and the United States. They sought - in a variety of ways - to bring about a radical change in the country's international status. Michael Barnhart's *Japan Prepares for Total War* is concerned with one group among them: those who envisaged solutions that would end in total war. As one would expect, most were Army and Navy officers.

When liberal pressures within Japan and changing international circumstance after 1918 began to nudge Japanese decision-makers towards a less military interpretation of how the national interest should be pursued, or even to put wealth first, conservatives and traditionalists claimed that the Meiji achievement was thereby being betrayed. In the name of defending it they demanded fundamental changes of direction. Conspicuous among these were the proposals put forward by a younger generation of professionally trained staff-officers - largely on the basis of what they had observed in Europe between 1914 and 1918 - for what amounted to a revised version of *fukoku-kyohai*, appropriate to Japan's role as an industrial power. To a country which was desper-



ately poor in raw materials, they maintained, security did not just require access to resources through trade. It rested also on the ability to guarantee supplies of them. This in turn implied political and military action, taken in advance of hostilities. From this beginning they went on to evolve plans for an autarkic sphere, dominated by Japan, which would be both self-sufficient and impervious to attack.

The attractions of the idea grew after 1930, until it was widely accepted by politicians and the public, as well as the military. Since one of its objects was to detach Japan from dependence on Anglo-American goodwill, that is, to ensure "autonomy" in foreign affairs, discussion of it necessarily takes in many of the factors which led to the Pacific War. Professor Barnhart does in fact consider most of them. His central themes, however, are how the policy of autarky took shape, what machinery was created for putting it into effect, and why it failed. He examines them principally through the use of military and related government archives.

Planning for self-sufficiency was in its early stages undertaken by Army staff-officers, notably Ishiwara Kanji and Nagata Tetsuzan. It had three purposes. One was the extension of Japanese power overseas in such a way as to ensure the supply of materials vital to war industry. The second was to stimulate industrial development within Japan with a view to a long-term increase in appropriate kinds of production. The third was to introduce reforms into Japanese society which would make it possible to impose controls on the economy, in order to meet the requirements of total war. One aspect of these was a series of measures to ensure that the national interest, as defined by the military, would take precedence over commercial profit (something completely at odds with what Ishibashi Tanzen urged).

In 1931 the architects of these plans were in a position to put them into effect with reference to Manchuria, partly because they held key appointments - Ishiwara, for example, was a senior member of the operations staff of the Kwantung Army - and partly because what they proposed had the support of other powerful groups, acting from different motives. For the next few years, in fact, the pervasiveness of their ideas and a willingness on the part of

their friends to take pre-emptive action gave them a significant voice in Japanese policy-making. Yet it would be wrong to attribute to them either the credit or the blame for the course of Japanese expansion in the decade before Pearl Harbor. Indeed, it would be more accurate to say that their efforts were frustrated. Taking military action, as was done intermittently between 1931 and 1937, then massively and continuously in China from 1937 to 1941, caused friction between those responsible for long-term planning and those who demanded munitions for immediate use. In disputes over the allocation of resources, field commanders and operations officers proved stronger than the planners, with the result that by the end of 1938 the latter's influence was lessening. Nagata was dead (assassinated by an officer who disagreed with him) and Ishiwara had been transferred to a post of negligible importance.

After the middle of 1937 economic planning and the implementation of Ishiwara's five-year development plan was entrusted to a new body, the Cabinet Planning Board. In theory it was to provide co-ordination. In practice it became a battleground on which rival contestants fought over quotas for scarce materials. The Army, in addition to conducting campaigns in China, was preparing for anticipated war with Soviet Russia. The Navy had as its prime task building a fleet which could defend the western Pacific against the United States. Their combined requirements, especially for oil and steel, far exceeded what Japan could produce or Japanese exports ordinarily pay for. Since the cabinet proved incapable of settling priorities as between their respective strategic plans, the only remaining recourse was to a network of controls over foreign trade and foreign exchange, to ensure that they were directed to the acquisition of essential materials; over the domestic economy, to divert capital and manpower to war industries; over civilian consumption, to minimize its demands on available resources. The Planning Board's occasional warnings that Japan was eating the seed corn went unheeded. Indeed, their only conspicuous outcome was the arrest of several of the Board's members in April 1941 on charges of communist activity. They were replaced by military officers, who saw their duty differently.

During 1941 Japanese leaders found themselves in an economic and military dilemma which reflected this failure to reconcile long-term and short-term needs. War in Europe had made the imports they wanted more expensive and more difficult to obtain. Stepping up attempts to procure them from Southeast Asia confirmed British and American suspicions that an "advance to the south" had already been decided on. This brought responses in the form of embargos and restrictions on credit, especially by the United States, which were designed to inhibit Japanese stockpiling and did in fact seriously enhance the difficulties of the Japanese armed forces. By October they were having to choose between making war or abandoning plans for "autonomy" and self-sufficiency, because there was no longer any possibility that resources would increase in pace with military needs. The result was Pearl Harbor.

The unsuccessful pursuit of autarky was one response to the growth of an industrial society in twentieth-century Japan, just as liberalism was another. Saionji Kinmochi (1849-1940), the subject of Lesley Connors's *The Emperor's Adviser*, personifies the attempt made by upper echelons of Japanese leadership to damp down the tensions between them and ward off the kind of destabilization that might lead to catastrophe. Saionji was successively diplomat, Foreign Minister, Prime Minister, and elder statesman (*Genro*), one of the small group - and its only survivor after 1924 - whose function it was to advise the emperor on the making of cabinets. As a court noble of distinguished lineage he had impeccable connections. As a protégé of Ito Hirobumi he early learnt the art of manipulating politicians; only to discover in the 1930s that manipulation was not enough.

Saionji, as Dr. Connors portrays him, was not so much a liberal in Ishibashi's sense (though he used his influence to promote party cabinets when he could) as heir to the "old man" wing of the Meiji elite. He was concerned

to defend Japan's constitutional monarchy against those who attacked either constitutionality or the monarchy itself. He continued to uphold the principles in foreign affairs that Ito and Inoue and (in a more extreme form) Ishibashi stood for: Japanese participation in an international order which enjoined co-operation with Britain and the United States, not autonomy. The Pacific War, had he lived to see it, would have been for him a tragedy on both counts.

It has long been held that Saionji abandoned his efforts to restrain Japanese expansion overseas in the interest of saving the monarchy. Connors does not see the position as quite so clear-cut, though the two things were certainly related. Lacking the feudal or bureaucratic power base that other *Genro* had enjoyed, Saionji built one for himself at court, by ensuring that the offices close to the throne (except the military ones) were held by men he could trust. From time to time he used the power this gave him - cautiously - to prompt imperial intervention in political decisions. There was nothing extraordinary about this, for his patrons and predecessors among the Meiji statesmen had done the same; but in his hands the weapon was so effective that those who wanted to bring about a "reconstruction" of Japanese society at home and "autonomy" abroad found court and *Genro* a significant obstacle. In 1935 they made them into targets of public criticism during the Minobe affair (a series of right-wing attacks on Japan's most distinguished constitutional lawyer for claiming that the monarchy was "an organ of the state", a view which was described by his critics as *lèse-majesté*). This, plus the abortive military coup of February 1936, in which members of the imperial family

came close to being involved, seems to have convinced Saionji that there was a danger to the monarchy too great for him to take the risk of thrusting it into politics again. "It has come to the stage", he wrote, "where politics has all but been taken over by the military, but I want to keep the Court, at least, free from this." As a pragmatist he recognized that the result would be to reduce his influence over foreign affairs, but believed that it was more important to retain a base from which to fight again. Politics was the art of the possible. The "trend of the times" - a phrase he frequently employed - would not always be unfavourable.

Dr. Connors's detailed reassessment of Saionji, like *Liberalism in Modern Japan* and *Japan Prepares for Total War*, gives greater depth to our understanding of the conflicts in Japan between the wars. All three books also have some relevance to the post-war period. Though Saionji was unable to preserve the Meiji settlement or prevent the Pacific War, he left in place at court and in parts of the bureaucracy a group of men of outlook similar to his own, who were able to moderate the consequences of defeat. Ishibashi's influence was more direct, for he lived to carry forward his ideas into the occupation years. As Finance Minister in 1946-7 and Minister of International Trade and Industry in 1954-6 he was able to inject some of his own economic realism into the thinking of post-war governments. And even the planners of total war left a peacetime legacy. Stripped of military purpose, the economic and administrative structures that they helped to build have played their part in Japan's industrial success since 1955. After all, one of their ablest civilian allies, Kishi Nobusuke, was Prime Minister from 1957 to 1960.

Endeavours and attachments

James Kirkup

ROHAN KODA

Pagoda, Skull and Samurai
Translated by Chieko Irie Mulhern
280pp. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle. 1,400 Yen, 4803304960

Japanese literary history usually classifies Rohan Koda as an "idealist" writer. He lived from 1867 to 1947, and so can be considered an author of the Meiji, Taisho and Showa eras. But he is quite unlike the majority of "confessional" novelists of the times, with their rambling, amorphous and often maudlin evocations of humdrum lives and naive emotions. Instead, his novels are carefully structured, and his literary style beautifully crafted. Underlying all his work is a profounder meaning. As the translator of this volume points out in her afterword, Rohan was deeply influenced by the social and moral-activist aspects of Confucianism in general, and by the action-orientated theories of Wang Yang-ming in particular. Rohan firmly believed that the mission of art is to enlighten and save mankind, by creating works whose structured microcosms are superior to nature or even to religion in their power to inspire and educate ordinary men. These principles are clearly what inform "The Five-Storey Pagoda" and "Encounter with a Skull", two of the stories here, with such pregnant symbolism.

In "The Five-Storey Pagoda", the humble carpenter Jabel is commanded to build his pagoda by a mysterious dream figure, and he and his workmen, despite tremendous difficulties, persevere in their faith in collective endeavour, after risking their lives and their artists' honour, to recreate eternity itself in the form of a perfectly constructed pagoda.

As well as the formal pleasure one derives from this novel, its neatly carpentered chapters as resistant yet flexible as the pagoda itself, the translator has done a remarkable job in transposing Rohan's exquisite style into English. The first paragraph is immediately striking for its elegance and balance, creating a portrait of a woman as vividly as any opening by Ivy Compton-Burnett:

Facing a sturdy rectangular brazier of elegantly grained zelkova wood edged with red oak sat a woman about thirty years of age who looked calm, serene in the absence of anyone to keep her com-

pany. Her handsome, almost staunch eyebrows were shaved off, an indication that she was married, leaving an appealing suggestion of bluish green, like the brilliant colour of mountains and rain.

"Encounter with a Skull" is an enchanting ghost story, very much in the Chinese style, as can be found in Lafcadio Hearn's *The Story of Ming-Yi*. It is about a wanderer in wintry mountains who loses his way and becomes spell-bound by a beautiful, mysterious young woman living alone in a primitive hut, who invites him to spend the night. As the translator points out, the tale "not only echoes Buddhist views and the eerie atmosphere and rich allusions characteristic of the fourteenth-century Noh theatre, but also mirrors the structure of a typical Noh ghost play".

"The Bearded Samurai" is a rather confusing little historical epic for anyone not familiar with sixteenth-century Japanese history, for whom the translator gives helpful commentaries. It is a tale of samurai courage and honour in the face of death, whose hero, Dairoku, seems to reflect the pragmatic attitudes of his real-life contemporaries Ieyasu and Nobunaga, who also appear. As in Saikaku's *Tales of Samurai Honour* there is a distinct homosexual flavour to this story. Tough warriors like Kairoku and Sakai Tadatsugu seem to dwell on the pure beauty of the young warrior Kotaro in sensuously affectionate terms:

His face, flushed and moist from excitement, was as pure and fair as a glistening white jewel. His tightly pulled petals of lips were flaming red, his soft eyebrows blue-black and his rage-widened eyes shimmering with gentle dew. A beautiful young boy, too delicate to be handled by rough hands.

Irie Mulhern explains the nature of homosexual samurai passion, citing the love of Nobunaga for Rammaru, his page, the most famous of his attachments: "Homosexual attachments between warriors have been far from uncommon in Japanese history and fiction . . . In an age infused with fatalistic Buddhist pessimism, a samurai would be considered the more masculine and self-controlled for this love of men and for his emotional detachment from women."

Despite the complex plotting and profusion of both historical and fictional characters, the translator has created a very readable and enjoyable work and it is to be hoped that, after the revelation of this volume, more of Rohan's work will be translated.

An eastern Arcadia

Carmen Blacker

TOSHIO YOKOYAMA

Japan in the Victorian Mind: A study of stereotyped images of a nation 1850-80
233pp. Macmillan. £27.50, 0333404726

Toshio Yokoyama, a historian of nineteenth-century Japan with an Oxford training, set himself to discover what "images" the Victorians entertained of Japan during the thirty years after 1850. To this end he ransacked with amazing enterprise every newspaper, every literary journal, every publisher's archive of the period. From *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, the *Fortnightly Review*, the *Cornhill* and even the *North British Review* he has brought to light a wealth of forgotten writing about Japan: buried articles by Mitford, Alcock and Frederick Marshall, sparkling contributions by Sir Charles Dilke before his political fall, a description of Kyoto in 1878 by Cyprian Bridge, an account of Edo by Robert Fortune, known to most of us only as the botanist who penetrated to innermost China in search of specimens for Kew. From this exciting trove Professor Yokoyama demonstrates that the Victorians before 1880 entertained one primary and persistent image of Japan. It was singular, remote, mysterious. Further, it was an unfallen paradise, a far-off elfland. Its people, uncorrupted by vice or greed, dwelt amid arcadian scenery on terms of perfect mutual courtesy.

Even before Commodore Perry forced his way into Japan in 1853, the Victorian public had been ready and eager to see in the secluded country an ideal landscape of this kind. No sooner were foreigners allowed in than publishers were clamouring for material which would reinforce this image. In any other view of Japan they were not interested, and indeed, one of the virtues of this book is the enterprising manner in which Yokoyama, not content with discovering neglected early writings on Japan, has gone further and tracked down, in likewise forgotten archives, all the correspondence relating to these articles. We can thus see how the writers' initial dispassionate view of Japan was transformed, through publishers' pressure, into the required image of innocence and simplicity, of cleanliness, gentleness and politeness, in marked contrast with the filth, dishonesty and sickening stench of China.

During the decade of the 1860s the image

proved more difficult to sustain. But despite the fact that several foreigners were hacked to pieces, that the Legation was murderously attacked, that Sir Henry Parkes narrowly escaped assassination, the picture of Japan at home remained obstinately bright. Sir Rutherford Alcock's attempts to portray Japan with all the realism of the new photography, to reveal a darker side of violence, cruelty, mendacity and licentiousness, were destined to be short-lived. Even Mitford, for all his realism, was soon depicting the *samurai*, not as the brutal ruffians he had seen in the early 1860s, but as English gentlemen in unfamiliar clothes. Japanese goods, exhibited at the Crystal Palace in 1862, reinforced the excited admiration. The ceramics, the colour prints, the bronzes, the swords, some of which were later bought by Arthur Liberty for his shop, all revealed a headily stimulating sense of design, a natural sense of harmony with nature.

Isabella Bird might write vividly of the villages in the north, through which she rode on her pony in 1878 *en route* to Hokkaido, where fetid filth, flies and disease abounded. The Victorian public continued to believe what the Jesuits had written in the sixteenth century of the immaculate cleanliness of everything Japanese. But as the 1870s progressed, as Japan embarked on her programme of headlong modernization, and as railways, factories, ill-fitting foreign clothes and badly copied foreign gawgaws began to sully the scene, a note of pain appeared in the reports. Birmingham had intruded into Arcadia. But who was to blame? Only ourselves, for who but we had allowed the serpent into the garden, and was it not only round the Treaty Ports that dirt, ugliness and beggars were to be observed?

Yokoyama's detached and descriptive stance is in pleasant contrast to the diatribes of Edward Said against Western "orientalism". The romantic image does not offend Yokoyama, for he sees it as a projection of the Western psyche in the 1870s, its doubts about the validity of material "progress", its nostalgia for a lost paradise in which beauty is effortlessly created. It is to be regretted that he did not extend his period for a few more years, to embrace the Aesthetic Movement, which adorned so many mantelpieces with fans and "consummate" Imari ware, and to demonstrate how the over-rosy image of Japan gave way to darker and more frightening ones. His book will prove a fascinating mine for historians of Japan, and for anyone concerned with the power of image and symbol.

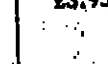
MARGUERITE DURAS

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A ritual in time

Mary Douglas

MAURICE BLOCH
From Blessing to Violence
214pp. Cambridge University Press. £30
(paperback, £9.95).
0521 306396

This remarkable book works at several levels: it is structural, historical, empirical and theoretical. It gives an account of one ceremony, the circumcision rites of the Merino of Madagascar, a people on whom Maurice Bloch has already published significant studies. Here he focuses on the continuity of the ceremony. How authentic are the claims that it is the same ceremony that has always been practised by the Merino since before Christianity became their state religion over 100 years ago? The question plunges him into the problem of similarity: what criteria will justify an authoritative identification of any one performance as being a performance of the same ritual?

The question of identity over time is one of the most profound in the philosophy of religion. Its counterpart is the question of identity over space. If we ask whether the practice of Christianity is the same in South America, Rome or London, the answer has to be no, not exactly the same. A book of common prayer or a missal helps to identify conforming rituals, as do Vedic texts for Hinduism and the Mishnah for Judaism. But what are we to say about the unconfirming practices, the developments, elaborations and truncations? And if a religion is not developing, is it a religion at all?

Professor Bloch can write about religious identity over a long period because he has used historical records. A royal speech dated to approximately 1810 expounds the laws concerning the circumcision. It is compulsory for every male, the various rites over the kingdom are orchestrated in a ranked series, and all must follow after the royal ceremony has taken place. Although the king, on this occasion, says, "I do not change the ways of the ancestors", his speech is actually innovative, since it makes a State ritual out of what had formally been the ritual of the descent groups. The first record is Ellis's *History of Madagascar* (1838), giving an eyewitness account of the 1825 celebration. There is an account for the 1844 ceremony and others for 1854 and 1865. The anthropologist himself witnessed it in 1965 and 1971. In presenting these accounts of what are purportedly various performances of the same ritual pattern, Bloch engages in that reassessment of historical sources now much practised among anthropologists. The rites have definitely changed over the long period.

Between 1780 and 1810 the king of the Merino increased the export of slaves to Mauritius in exchange for guns. The nascent State was

organizing courts, markets, taxation and *corvées*, centralizing the cults as it was centralizing its military potential. In 1817 King Radama signed a treaty with the British abolishing the slave trade in his realm, in return for which he received military and technical aid and welcomed missionaries who would teach literacy, administrative and technical skills to his people. However, by 1828, the queen who succeeded him led a strong popular movement to be rid of foreign control. Christians were persecuted, missionaries expelled and the local descent group cults were consolidated into a State religion. After the queen's death in 1861, Christianity continued to be officially persecuted, but such were the vicissitudes of political strife that it became very powerful, eventually rivaling the State in influence, until in 1869 it was made the State religion. In this period the Merinos were aligned between Catholic and Protestant denominations. When, in 1895, Madagascar was taken by the French, the Catholic Churches (dominated by French clergy) acquiesced in foreign rule, while the Protestants became acknowledged leaders of resistance. At this stage no Merino traditional religion seemed available to fire the opposition. After a major revolt against the French had been forcibly suppressed in 1947 nominal independence was accorded to the Merino. By the 1960s Christian dominance had given way before a strong revival of the traditional religion, now finally perceived as a real alternative to Christianity.

The political backdrop allows Bloch to interpret the various accounts of circumcision by relating its abbreviated forms either to the moments when the Merino state was not integrated or to the inimical dominance of Christianity, and its fullest forms to its function as the expression of Merino cultural expansion and autonomy. Inevitably the analysis resembles somewhat the work of archaeologists and old-style ethnologists trying to trace the spread of a cultural pattern. When the ceremony is very long in duration it is composed of the same core elements, some repeated many times; it includes substitutions which count as such because they occur in a given context and have the same meanings attributed to them (as spade and spear-both signify men's work), or because they signify the same in a more grandiose aspect (as when at the time of maximum imperial aggrandizement wild water that used to be brought in from holy lakes to be blessed and tamed is brought from the ocean).

The unusual historical depth makes this main part of the book a signal achievement, and I find the identification fully convincing. The circumcision has changed, it has been adapted to varying circumstances, but it has enough spatio-temporal continuity to establish its identity. In another sense its identity surmounts the changes in its appearance because it is performed with the same intentions. These are the inducting of male children to their social role. They are tamed and worthy to accumulate blessings in their lifetime, blessings transmitted by the elders from the ancestors.

Fieldwork among the wealthy

Jeremy MacClancy

GARY WRAY McDONOGH
Good Families of Barcelona: A social history of power in the industrial era
262pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.
£15.10.
0691 094268

Though they have often discussed the possibility of investigating modern capitalist elites in Western societies, very few social anthropologists have tried to do fieldwork among them. This omission is all the more striking in that such groups display processes of group formation comparable to those in technologically primitive societies. Perhaps the problem has been lack of "contacts" and of funds sufficient to live among wealthy whites who do not automatically grant academics the prestige necessary to be able to ask endless questions. Why put up with a nosy intruder if there is little to be gained?

Thanks to personal ties and a "friend of a friend" in one family, Gary McDonogh gained

the elders themselves being soon to join their ancestors and the infants to join in turn the men and then the elders and the ancestors. The central theme is obedience to the order of descent established by the ancestors. The circumcision is a legitimization of authority; it asserts a timeless order, set in antithesis to the flux and wild disorder of nature. It is an enactment of wildness tamed by blessing.

Most of the enactment is of the antithesis of what the ritual establishes, so the ceremonies are full of chasing and breaking and dirt slung about. What is described parallels the celebration of *communitas*, as Victor Turner used to call it, the liminal experience of being outside the formal order of society. Turner's explanation was more apt to honour the value of *communitas* as distinguished from structure, whereas according to Bloch these Merino rituals are definitely on the side of order and of masculine authority. The meaning is the same even when it is extended from the authority of the elders over the descent group to the authority of the kings over the whole kingdom. Again, I am convinced – so much so that I suggest it can be carried forward constructively to clarify the theoretical problems to which the beginning and end of the book are devoted.

In 1863 there was a popular millennialist revolt against the dominance of Christians, but it collapsed. Reflecting on the relation between religion and politics, Bloch regards it as a failed attempt at religious innovation and says that "the political failure of the revolts doomed any possibility of real ritual innovation." According to the story that has been unfolded, the rituals of blessing from ancestors to elders to the new generation are themselves the source of stability, sufficiently strong to discredit the expectations of any millennialist cult that will sweep away the old order. Using a horticultural metaphor, Bloch says that the several millennialist movements led to a sterile florescence that did not bear fruit.

Evidently, cargo cults are endemic in some social conditions and the source of innovations, while here, among the Merino, the old rituals reassert themselves. This gives rise to a discussion whether rituals and religion take place in an autonomous sphere of their own, independent of the practical sphere of economics and politics. However, the dichotomy is not necessary to the story, whose lesson can be put more simply, without setting religious ritual categorically over and against other ritual or religious reality and experience over and against other reality and experience. A common-sense simplification would say that the commitment of the Merino to the social order had been so strong through the centuries that the ceremonies which express it continue to have meaning for them; consequently, we can say that the meanings of social stability and established authority dear to the Merino are in direct opposition to the meanings which inspire a millennial movement of revolt, even if the revolt is against the authority of outsiders. This simplification, if adopted, would cut across most of the theoretical discussion which frames

entry to the Good Families, the almost two hundred patrilineages who have controlled Barcelona economically for much of the past 150 years. As McDonogh sees it, "family" here is central, as structure, practice and ideology. Capitalist industrialization both gave power to an emergent group and transformed its family patterns: individual entrepreneurs did not pass their patrimony on to their eldest sons but established *casas industriales* ("industrial households") by dividing it among all their male offspring. Kinship was crucial as relations and affines formed business and social ties. The Good Families arose as a new elite from the meeting of these industrialists with the older, urban aristocracy. The industrialists' children became ladies and gentlemen of upper-class etiquette, speech and culture, and traded economic for social capital, confirming their claims to high status by marrying aristocrats.

"Family" was used both as a metaphor for the "historical" homogeneity of Catalonia against the intrusions of the centralist Spanish state, and as a model for social relations within the region: it was both a uniting and a defining

the account of circumcision.

Although he guys most of the authors with whom he disagrees, it is not completely unfair of Bloch to summarize a huge body of argument about religion and ideology as a bouncing between two walls, a functionalist wall of real relationships and an intellectualist wall of imaginary, ideological symbolic relationships. Bloch proposes to stop the ball from bouncing by setting up two other walls. Rituals for him are a different kind of phenomenon from the politico-economic. This he claims to have demonstrated by taking, as he so admirably does, the long historical viewpoint. However, a longer historical depth of itself does not yield better categories of analysis. When he says ritual, what kind of ritual does he have in mind? Does he mean descent group and royal rituals and community rites of all kinds or does he include domestic rituals of greeting and commemoration, small, local, temporary rituals? He himself bounces a little between proposing that ritual is a different phenomenon and that it is a different form of communication.

One must sympathize with Bloch's dissatisfaction with the state of the art in writing about religion. As his amusing summary of other scholars' theories shows, the whole subject is dominated by a representative theory of knowledge. The relation between the things symbolized and the symbols dominates and bedevils the thinking. He calls out for recognition of another form of communication, expression rather than denotation. Without saying more about what he means by expression, he would get into the same kind of difficulties as with two kinds of reality, ritual and non-ritual. But fortunately for the future discussions this book will generate there is a well-developed theory of expression by exemplars in the writings of Nelson Goodman. Learning by exemplification is much discussed in the philosophy of science. This form of communication applies to all rituals, to the tea ceremony and the toasting of absent friends as well as to the great celebration of royal occasions. On this approach the rites of the Merino would be performances which exemplify their theory of descent as a timeless reality set amid temporal chaos. Exemplification, according to Goodman, is a more direct form of reference than denotation.

Durkheim could forgive the author for giving him along with everybody else since Bloch has done him the honour of writing a superb Durkheimian analysis. If he were more aware of what precursors he was drawing upon, he might have been saved from leaving unexplained his sense that rituals are a different kind of reality. Durkheim taught that religion is a meta-communication in which individuals express the timeless transcendence of their social order over their individual wishes. If Durkheim is right, Bloch is right; the circumcision rite is a performance that acts out a meta-mediation on the social order and it is, indeed, very different from the other lower-level meditations on economic advantage or political strategy.

chical concept. In the Barcelona Opera House and the city's Old Cemetery, "family" was represented as an enduring hierarchy and Catalan society was portrayed as an ordered inequality among classes. Symbolizing the recent economic decline of the Good Families, the Opera House is now no longer controlled by the wealthy elite, but by the Catalan Government. McDonogh argues that "family" is central to any study of elites since it is a basic structure through which power is held and distributed, an agent for the distribution of rights and privileges, and a potent symbol. If social anthropology has to seem more "relevant" these days, then the comparative study of these power-holding groups via such a notion promises much.

The power of the family in Italian life is one of the many topics covered by Luigi Barzini in his *The Italians* (first published in 1964 and reviewed in the TLS on October 22 that year), which has recently appeared as a Hamish Hamilton paperback (352pp. £5.95. 0 241 12514 3).

Between kraal and college

Chinweizu

TEPILIT OLESAITOTI
Worlds of a Maasai Warrior
360pp. Deutsch. £12.95.
0233 979735

It is remarkable that a Maasai warrior who has confronted and speared a majestic lioness while still an uncircumcised boy can find himself no match for a bunch of inexhaustibly energetic, atrociously mannered, rich American nine-year-olds. But after losing fifteen pounds in his first week as a counsellor in an upstate New York summer camp, Tepilit Ole Saitoti was ready to give up. The events which led to this strange situation began when Tepilit's father broke with Maasai tradition and sent him to a westernized school in his native Tanzania. Tepilit was chosen because his father believed that he was the one son who would always stray to the family, no matter how far he strayed into the great unknown world, with its park rangers, tourists, guns and cameras, that had arrived outside his Ngorongoro kraal. His father was right, for he always returned. *Worlds of a Maasai Warrior* is the autobiographical account of Tepilit's shuttling between the Maasai and the West, up until his return from college education in America.

In his quest for education, Tepilit's nomadism ranged far beyond the Serengeti plains of Tanzania. It took him to Kenya, Germany and the United States. He returned periodically to the life of a Maasai herdsman, and although each return and subsequent departure caused its own psychological rupture, the values of Maasai life remained his spiritual anchor.

Among the highlights of his adventure were his first encounters with the automobile, with reading and writing, with Christianity, with Western women, with the aeroplane, with

snow (or "white ash"), and with Western music in its various forms – church, disco, symphony. On the trek to his first school, Tepilit and his companions travelled by car for the first time: I passed by the front of the car and saw two big eyes, which I came to learn later were the lights. All the boys were securely on top of the car when I climbed up. It was shaking like a frightened cow because the engine was on, I was told.

After he became a Christian at school, his father laughed at him, saying: "Do not make me think you are a nothing." Though humiliated by his remark, Tepilit was baptized into the Lutheran Church a few years later – in effect, he had no choice, since schooling and Christianity were inseparable in a mission school. He remembers that

We were congratulated by our teacher, and everybody else around told us that our souls were now white as snow, having been cleansed of all our sins. I felt so pure that I wanted to die before messing up again. I knew it would be hopeless to try to live a whole day without sinning. It was hard to remain pure when it was demanded that you do not desire, swear in God's name, or even cheat a little. Although I had accepted Christian teachings, I was still puzzled by how Jesus was born. That is one story I will never tell my father. He would wonder about my intelligence.

When Tepilit goes to his first symphony concert in Munich, he feels homesick, the atmosphere reminding him of important Maasai ceremonies; when he finds that his education at an American college is "similar to treading the rigorous path of achieving manhood in Maasai-land", he reminds us that whatever the superficial differences between cultures, they are often more similar than we conventionally imagine.

Although Tepilit had become a Christian, the more education he acquired, the less religious he became. "Slowly I realized that my own Maasai religion was as valid as any other." When one of his brothers died and he was



A detail from an unknown photographer's gelatin silver print, circa 1900, of a Maasai. The picture is reproduced from Africa Then: Photographs 1840–1918, edited by Nicholas Munzi (175pp. £20. 0500 54130 2), which will be published by Thames and Hudson on August 24.

summoned home, he took stock of himself. He found that because of his new habit of travelling by car and by plane he was physically out of shape and that scepticism had impaired his spiritual health. Nevertheless, he agreed to travel with one of his other brothers to see a *laibon* (spiritual leader) who had undertaken to create harmony in his family. When the rituals of the spiritual treatment were completed, he felt happier and lighter in spirit. On their walk home, however, an incident revealed just how un-Maasai his perceptions had become. When he mistook a distant tree for a

dangerous buffalo, his brother mocked him: "It's hard to walk at night with Americans; they see trees with horns and tails."

Years after familiarity with the West might have been expected to have dulled his memory of his initial responses, Tepilit Ole Saitoti is still able to present them freshly to us. He has given us a humorous, light-hearted account of his cross-cultural explorations, underlining the point that just as there is no absolute inertial reference frame in the physical world, so each culture is its own centre, and one is no more valid than any other.

Between science and poetry

Nigel Barley

EDITH TURNER
The Spirit and the Drum: A memoir of Africa
165pp. Tucson: Arizona University Press.
\$18.95.
08165 10091

It seems offensive to describe a woman who is a working anthropologist in her own right as a "wife of anthropologist Victor Turner". Yet such is the self-effacing position adopted by Edith Turner. *The Spirit and the Drum* is dedicated to her husband and the warmth of their relationship permeates it as it clearly sustained them in prolonged bouts of fieldwork. It is a haunting book, tracing Edith Turner's development from Marxist-dialectic studenthood to nostalgic widowhood in an African setting. It is deeply personal in that – in the spirit of participant observation – Turner did not just observe but also underwent the complex and often lurid rituals of Ndembu life: she has squirted maternal milk at strange deities, joined in wild dances and been plastered with medicines.

The ultimate justification of the anthropological researcher is that he/she can claim insight through unique exposure to and internalization of the alien. The familiar paradox is that it is the task of the analyst – as of the biographer – to help others to overcome the uniqueness of that experience through the written word. The unsatisfactoriness of the anthropological monograph as the vehicle for that act of sharing has become increasingly evident as more fieldworkers allow access to their private thoughts and feelings in works that lie outside that genre. The work of Victor Turner has always been inherently uncomfortable in that it argues of the importance of emotion and experience in the arid prose of detached analysis.

The medium and the message are at war. Small wonder, then, that he has been accused of excessive theology.

The value of books such as Edith Turner's lies in the gap between the "learned" and the "popular" works. In the case of the *The Spirit and the Drum* the gap seems smaller than one would have expected. It was written, for the most part, some thirty years after the events it describes. What more natural, then, than to use the *oeuvre* of Victor Turner as the point of departure and the basic framework? The interpretation of ritual is the core of the book, based upon the notion of word meaning, the importance of etymologies, situational meaning and physiological references and above all the role of experience in a social context. There is the blood tree, the milk tree, beloved of undergraduate essays. (I confess, I had forgotten the tear tree.) There are drums of affliction and the slaying of the White spirit.

But Edith Turner also – and this is new – stresses the poetic aspect of Ndembu ritual so that she is on occasion driven to quote Western poetry in a fashion that seems oddly antiquarian. The tendency is inevitable for, if one abandons cold analysis, what alternative to poetry is left? When anthropologists quote poetry it usually means that they are trying to fudge the issue of causal efficacy or even rationality. Yet here it seems a genuine attempt to grasp a transient and ineffable moment, such as occurs when Turner glimpses the passage of village life, of thirty years of joys and griefs, in an African wife's Bogart-like smile. The line between open emotion and cloying sentimentality is hairline, but this book seldom if ever strays the wrong side of it. It should therefore not be read as the publisher's blurb urges, as the work of "the wife of Victor Turner", for there are few insights into either him or his work. It deserves to be read in its own right.

When Islington meets Bangladesh

Joanna Motion

FRANCIS ROLT
The Last Armenian
193pp. Hamish Hamilton. £10.95.
0241 123445

The story of the last Armenian in Bangladesh is told by the umpteenth wandering Brit. The book's first-person narrator, Charles, finds himself almost at random in Chittagong. After a desert sojourn in Sudan, he occupies a university post in the violent lushness of Bengal: "to drift, to enter another culture and to move on when bored, seemed a reasonable, even enviable existence". Entering another culture, for Charles, becomes a matter of coming to grips with Shiuli, a young Bengali woman who seems both the essence and the bikini-wearing refutation of the place he seeks to know. Part of Shiuli's difference lies in her upbringing at the hands of the man who adopted her as a

founding: Jo, the last Armenian in the country, and by temperament, history and geography another outsider-insider.

For a while these three share the peace of their crumbling house behind huge wooden doors at Number One Armenian Street, and enjoy the exploration both of each other and of the swarming city beyond their high walls. But Jo's death in confused circumstances is the hinge on which the love affair between Charles and Shiuli, Charles and Bangladesh, breaks.

Threaded through the book is a nagging preoccupation: how to come to terms with a place whose continuing history is so violent, where nature is so devastatingly energetic, where the inequities are so extreme, and remain human? Mysticism, intellectualism, the soft focus of the Romantic view – all popular ways of dealing with the subcontinent – each seems inadequate. Yet, as the evidence of atrocities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, where the ancient tribal peoples fight a dirty war with the nastier aspects of the twentieth century, is forced on their attention, first Jo, then Shiuli,

then Charles have to consider in personal terms whether passive acquiescence might be another sort of crime. "If you let people die you're as bad as the murderers", is the view Shiuli comes to, and she follows her own logic into desperate paths. She finds her place and cause, albeit a lethal one.

In Charles, the passer-through, parallel pressures create a different response: "You don't understand the strain of living in a place where people are abandoned like bits of old sacking on the streets, where every day I do something I'm ashamed of: ignoring a beggar, shouting at a rickshawallah." In Shiuli's eyes, the haven of sanity he holds out for them, a North London flat with a view of the park, is itself the abnormality: most of the world is more like Bangladesh than Islington. Torn and inadequate, Charles escapes first to the Buddhist calm of Kathmandu, and then, temporarily at least, through a gap in his mind.

In this, his first novel, Francis Rolt has taken on a fascinating, exasperating country and a theme that is both profound and deeply felt.

The anguished flashback which is the central section of the book gives his narrator the opportunity to recollect his initial enthusiasm for the vigorous life and high colour of the place; even the subsequent scenes of wrangling with obstructive officials display a relish for its people and its language: "Charming sir... In this matter the superintendent is hapless." But Rolt isn't yet up to the weight of his subject. Charles's account of the passionate, murderous, life-changing events he describes is too often encased in airy or hummy self-consciousness ("I paid little attention to the usual eddying crowd"; "I stammered an affirmative reply"). Attempts to match up to the material risk portentousness ("I ascribe a particular fatefulness to this step"). Rolt seeks to legitimize some laboured or sickly flights of fancy by calling attention to them – the flowers of the shiuli tree, after which Charles's lover is named, are described as "almost comically tropical, so lovely and so brief, as insubstantial as romance". The point is made but a squirm remains.

Lines, ludes and Popper

Toby Flitton

WILLIAM DONALDSON
Is This Allowed?
271pp. Macdonald. £10.95.
0356 12293 X

Is This Allowed? is told by an anonymous, intermittently prosperous Wykehamist author with a taste for "girls with mad legs and minds like soda water". He does a lucrative trade in "toilet books" with titles like *How to Be a Pin-Stripped Romeo* and *The Naff Calendar*, churned out by the dozen for an undemanding Christmas market. He escapes from the domesticities of London for a spell at his flat in Ibiza with a girl hired for the week as a sexual companion. Among the packaged wiles of the arrival lounge this shining-eyed girl, Melissa, proves outstanding, not least when her eyes shine the more brightly after her frequent visits to the powder room. She is of course as high as a kite on-lines of cocaine.

No stranger to drugs himself – the occasional mandy or lude – he is grabbed immediately by his "Princess", getting a vicarious buzz from her excesses. However much he believes, like all addicts, that he "can handle it", the new thrill she gives him has him completely hooked. "I'm the drug of your choice", she tells him, as he falls inevitably for the illusion rather than the reality.

Without drugs, Princess Melissa is a mere holidaymaker; with them, she can make a whole room dance. A failed impresario, it suits his style to show her off to the "retinue of twerps" he finds in the glitzy bars of Ibiza. By the time they return to London he is abjectly dependent. The plot that was in a holiday mood in the Mediterranean darkens rapidly at home. The book is loosely enough shaped to allow several pages of barely relevant lawsuit farce before the smart pushers arrive, bearing her pleasure in Rolls Royces, and a society drugs scandal is introduced as the freebase start brewing up in their atomies.

By then she is a huddled, weepy little mess, but he still pours money into her, hoping to regain the personality he has imagined for her. Perhaps the narrator deserves to be ripped off. He is a smug fellow, precariously in touch with reality, dropping real names (Martin Amis, Anthony Powell, someone called Lord Dymov) with much the same consciousness as he cites Canetti and Nietzsche [sic] or quotes Popper to unimpressed girls in wine bars. For him autobiography and fantasy have become as inextricably mingled as in one of his private albums of pornographic snapshots.

It is fantasy that triumphs in this black comedy. "You'll never replace me", the Princess tells her victim, and he knows that the spiritual treatment prescribed for her will destroy his illusion for ever. Bitterly contemptuous of the clinic in which she dies, he is comforted that "the idea of her grows no smaller and I'll never want anyone else".

The last picture-shows

John Clute

ROBERT COOVER
A Night at the Movies or, You Must Remember This: Fictions
187pp. Heinemann. £12.95.
0434 14390 1
RICHARD YATES
Cold Spring Harbor
182pp. Methuen. £10.95.
0413 14420 8

When the Second World War began for the United States, Richard Yates was fifteen years old and Robert Coover was nine. They were both old enough to be haunted by the memory of that sunset of peace and seeming innocence. Both *A Night at the Movies* and *Cold Spring Harbor* are set at the beginning of the 1940s, though it might be more accurate to say that Coover's collection of post-modernist fables takes its sustenance from that period, and both books are elegies for that vanished world.

A brash foregrounding of language and special effects may initially conceal the frozen melancholy that permeates the tales collected in *A Night at the Movies*, but there can finally be no doubt as to the sadness in them. For a short while, pazzazz may seem to prevail. Coover replaces the normal table of contents with a "Program" which spools the night's attractions in terms directly evocative of the cinema in 1940, and gives the impression that stories like "Shootout at Gentry's Junction", "Charlie in the House of Rue" or "You Must Remember This" should be read as formal displays of fabulist wit. But in "Shootout", Gary Cooper's archaic fragile rectitude fails to cope with a ribald adversary who incarnates chaos and death; in "Charlie", the bewildered ageing Charlie Chaplin of 1940 founders deeper and deeper into a world where every prank brings death closer to real people; in "You Must Remember This", Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman engage in an obsessive sexual relationship that recasts *Casablanca* in terms that were inadmissible in 1942. These tales, and the interludes that separate them, are brazenly witty, but the homages they present are savagely disruptive of the veil of nostalgia through which it has become comfortable to view the safe past before the troubles began, cinema began to die, and the numbed audience awoke.

The movies of 1940 may work as solace for their viewers half a century later; for the citizens of 1940, they also served as models of the world. Throughout Richard Yates's novel *Cold Spring Harbor*, which is set on Long Island in 1942, a cinematic subtext constantly shapes everyone's behaviour, as well as their sense of what they ought to expect from adulthood, marriage, children, jobs. As in all of Yates's fiction since his first novel, the stunning *Revolutionary Road* (1961), these expectations are sapped by failures of luck, energy and purpose. As always in his work, almost everyone drinks too much, though no one remarks on the fact. As always, a kind of mental paralysis fixes everyone as in amber, even in these sunset years before the war.

Boys on the brink

Christopher Hawtree

JAY PARINI
The Patch Boys
218pp. New York: Henry Holt. \$15.95.
08050 0047 X

Perhaps owing to a jacket-painting of some healthy-looking lads at play in a river, *The Patch Boys* has found considerable success in the American "young adult" market. Yet on page sixty-nine, appropriately enough, practices are extolled that, committed on the premises, would lead to immediate expulsion. Be that as it may, Jay Parini, who is already known as a poet and critic, has written a novel that can be enjoyed for the first time at any age.

Not a great deal happens (it hardly could) in this account of a fifteen-year-old's summer in a Pennsylvania mining town during 1925. The mines are there as a background, a threat of what might well lie ahead in an existence which, for the moment, is happily passed swimming in a river of questionable purity and, equally, stifling erotic yearnings which focus on one Ellie Maynard. That adolescent sense of being on the brink of discovering everything about the world has rarely been so well captured as it is here. Parini allows his first-person narrator, Sammy di Carini, neither to indulge in irony at the expense of his younger self nor to let rip with torrents of therapeutic, "poetic" recollection.

All is held in check by a prose that is no less vigorous for being finely controlled: the force of a swim in the buff with Ellie is duly balanced

by the writing of verse of a fearful sincerity. A visit to a loan-shark brother in New York comes to an equally unfortunate, messy end and contrasts with the grim sweat of life below ground back home – all of it subject to the confession-box and Father Francis. The melodrama of the ending comes as an inevitable part of life in a town where forces are always

present to quell those such as Sammy, who have gained a glimpse of the possibilities beyond it. "Whatever the world threw at me now, I would throw back in spades." It would be pleasing if a publisher, bent on grabbing a copy of *Spacatcher* at Kennedy Airport, made the small detour necessary to secure the English rights to this novel.

Lives of such morose immobility should make for depressing reading, and much of Yates's work seems unbearably deterministic in its insistence on the erosions of living. *Cold Spring Harbor*, however, though it is minor Yates, has an almost bracing effect, quite probably because of the elegiac distance from which it is narrated. Though the faltering centre of the plot may be Evan Shepard and his incoherent, stumbling fall into an almost incestuous adultery, *Cold Spring Harbor*'s centre of consciousness is Evan's young brother-in-law, a character with little to do in 1940 except attempt to survive adolescence, but with a great deal to remember. If there is any hopefulness in this tale of entrapment and paralysis set so long ago, it may well be the implicit sense that one young boy managed to escape, and now manages to remember, through the pages of this book.

Art of the states

Linda Taylor

THOMAS MCGUANE
To Skin a Cat: Stories
212pp. Secker and Warburg. £10.95.
0436 27036 6
ANN BEATTIE
Where You'll Find Me and other stories
191pp. Macmillan. £9.95.
0433 44683 3

There's at least one song, they say, for every state in the USA. Increasingly, it seems, the short story in America is also producing a narrative voice for every state: Flannery O'Connor in Georgia, Fudora Welty in Mississippi, were only the beginning. Thomas McGuane hails from Montana, and the stories in *To Skin a Cat* are locally rooted: they are alive with cattlemen and duck hunters, and with the contrast between ranch life and small-town provincialism. There is a sense that the wild is only just tamed, that it might encroach at any moment – not just in terms of Nature "out there" but in the natures of the characters that McGuane describes. The narrator in "Like a Leaf", for instance, is first encountered under his house, poisoning rats. At the same time, he is listening to the conversation of a neighbour and his visiting mistress. The narrator, both disapproving and titillated, courts the mistress, discovers her to be a regular whore and ends up shooting her. This is frontier behaviour: rats or mistresses, you have to get rid of the homebreakers. "I represent civilization in a small but real way", says the narrator.

With so much potential unruliness, both out there and in here, there is a bid to stay on top. In the title story, Bobby Deatur admires falcons; but "if they get miles and little parasites", he says, "they lose their edge and can no longer win the game of survival". Bobby, at sea in a sophisticated, decadent world way outside of Montana, fails to take heed of his own knowledge about falcons. Like a character he might have seen on television back home in Deadrock, he has a "propensity not to be normal" and "sees himself as dangerous". In fact, Bobby is a wild boy with too much money: he dreams of being a pimp in San Francisco, because of the power he'll wield; without recognizing the miles and little parasites that will then destroy him.

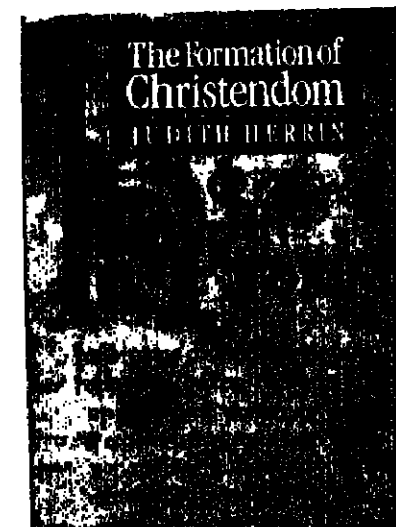
McGuane is skilful at vividly conveying a series of escalating absurdities in which characters and events are out of control in a present to quell those such as Sammy, who have gained a glimpse of the possibilities beyond it. "Whatever the world threw at me now, I would throw back in spades." It would be pleasing if a publisher, bent on grabbing a copy of *Spacatcher* at Kennedy Airport, made the small detour necessary to secure the English rights to this novel.

grotesquely funny way: the man who attempts a sexual assault on the dummy at a demonstration of emergency procedures in case of heart attack, for instance. There is a curious mixture of thuggery and conformity in the parochial lives that McGuane describes. He conjures a sub-civilization where conventional right and wrong do not always apply, where you can trade a daughter's illegitimate new-born baby to a childless judge in return for his finding in your favour at a court proceeding.

Ann Beattie's stories, set far away from cattlemen and hunters, rats and falcons on the relatively civilized East Coast, deal with a sweetly sad territory of domestic relationships: one of inevitable misunderstandings. Her narrative technique is in tune with how people recollect connections and mis-connections with others: "People forget years and remember moments. Seconds and symbols are left to sum things up." So, too, she goes on, in a story called "Snow", are single words: "What I remember about all that time is one winter. The snow. Even now, saying 'snow', my lips move so that they kiss the air."

Although "Snow" is the shortest and most schematic piece in *Where You'll Find Me*, its formula holds good for the other stories. Their narrators, telling about domestic scenes (a dinner, Christmas, a journey in a car), pay particular attention to details – of clothing, circumstance, gesture – vividly and realistically described. These intense juxtaposed images suggest loaded meaning. The point, in fact, is one about contingency: there is no meaning as such; the whole just happens to be composed of a set of random particles.

Events and characters in Beattie's stories are blurred, but the method is wholly convincing – it has the truth of the therapist's couch where images are conjured up and sifted. Unlike McGuane's, Beattie's "voice" is stateless; but she writes about the no-man's-land of feeling with cosmopolitan authority.



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Remainders

Eric Korn

Members of the Jury, you have seen the plaintiff's wife, Molly Bloom, in the witness box. Some of you may keep that image all your lives. You may ask yourself whether it is likely that the plaintiff, an artist, a man of affairs, and a man with a respected position in the life of his country and with a daughter at a supremely fascinating age, would throw all this away for a brief bout of loveless commercialized sex in Nighttown. You may ask yourself whether it is not more probable that this fine man has been lured by the doubtful witness of Cissy Caffery, Gerty MacDowell and a certain Bella Bello; to say nothing of the evident malignity of one James Joyce, a renegade Irishman, manifestly untrustworthy, satirical and nearly blind whereas Molly what a fascinating I am of course impartial and undoubtedly fragrant under the Spanish with her breasts going all perfume I must not attempt to sway your judgment Yes I will Yes.

Gentlemen of the jury we are doubtless all very sorry for this Sonya but the facts remain that she is only a Russian tart and a female one at that while Mr Raskolnikov, a young man of great promise and self-confidence

Men of the Jury you have seen Sir John Falstaff in the witness box and

★ ★ ★

The BBC has an estimable programme called *What the Papers Say* (it seeks to tell you what the papers say), which these days reminds me more and more of Joyce Grenfell awarding prizes at a nursery school art exhibition while resolutely ignoring the fact that the entire schoolroom is disfigured by gigantic obscene and subversive graffiti. They tell you what this paper thinks about the Sunnis and the Shias and what that one thinks of constitutional issues in the Philippines and how they are practically unanimous in their concern with M2 money supply figures and you sip your coffee and think my! what a responsible press we do have,

Intellectuals in conflict

Michael Schmidt

The *Congrés Internacional d'Intel·lectuals i Artistes* in Valencia this June had a mission. Fifty years ago the Second Congress of Writers Against Fascism and in Defence of Culture, the legendary gathering of well-meaning and left-thinking writers, met in Valencia to express support for the Republican cause. The 1987 Executive Committee—including Fernando Savater, Jorge Semprún, Juan Goytisolo, Juan Cusato and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán—sent out invitations with a Manifesto which promised not a "mere commemoration, a self-satisfied evocation of the past . . . It is time for a clarification of theory regarding the role of intellectuals, the exact nature of their social commitment; time, at last, to delineate and denounce the injustices, however flagrant, of what was then a just cause."

The Manifesto divided sheep from goats. Rafael Alberti and Gabriel García Márquez cried off; the Official Russian Delegation was swept by a flu bug and unable to attend. Cuba did send an official delegation to complement the exiled Cuban writers—Heberto Padilla, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Carlos Franqui and Marta Freyre—who were invited. In 1937 all delegations were official; in 1987 only one. Our Congress was of (individual) delegates, exiles and émigrés. The official Cuban delegation was an illuminating anachronism, an echo of 1937. There were other anachronisms from recent history and some victims of it—in the East European exiles, in Arab writers from North Africa, Lebanon and Iraq who brought their troubled world with them; and in the Dorian Gray figure of Daniel Cohn-Bendit, as rosy-checked as Hopkins's bugler, commanding the stage with the fervour of 1968, though his politics had undergone a mutation. These ghosts, and the victims of current turmoil, underlined a theme of the Congress: history moves at different paces in different lands: what is dead in Europe survives in the Arab world and in Latin America.

our constitutional freedoms are safe in their hands. Meanwhile in the real world two-thirds of the newspaper-buying, the daily-printed-material-buying public subsists, perhaps by choice, on nothing but vicars' knickers and royal romps and loony lesbian moors monster bingo fun. The river of information is pumped and desalinated and facsimiled and satellite-bounced around the world, but high up in the mountains the source is polluted by the same old dripping excrement, the same old dead sheep.

★ ★ ★

The foreign press, by contrast, has an unerring sense of news values. I have by me—as who does not?—a recent issue of *La Semana al Servicio del Pueblo* (The Weekly Public Servant? A Week's Devotion to the Popular Cause? Seven Days of Doing Good to YOU?) of Tecate, Baja California (where the beer comes from), which leads with a story of universal appeal: "INHABITANT OF TECATE INJURED BY SHOT AS HE DESCENDS FROM HIS AUTOMOBILE TO URINATE". The opening paragraph of the story is a model of journalistic explication: who? (José Ramón Uribe Pareles); when? (22.30); where? (corner of Avenida Mexico and 17th Street); no, where? (sorry, in the left arm); additional information, material but also picturesque, enabling reader to identify with subject of story? (to satisfy a physiological need).

The remaining paragraph is succinct. The injured person presented himself to the IVth Sector of the PJE (Simón Abitia Torres, Secretary) to make a report of his own free will. He accepted that he had made a human error but was driven to it by fuertes dolores in the estomago which obliged him to search for a place to ir al baño, notwithstanding (sin embargo) on lowering his pantalones he heard the detonation of a firearm and discovered that blood was running down his arm, because the bullet had struck him.

And there, admirably, without trivial detail, spurious background, vain speculation, or any species of lily-painting (ITS WHOOPS OLE

AS JOSE SPENDS PESO) or refined-gold-gilding (BATHROOM BANDIDO BRINGS PANIC TO PUEBLO), we leave our hero, with a firm grasp of his stomach, his trousers, his bleeding left arm and the senseless cruelty of the universe.

★ ★ ★

If we are at the dawn of a bright new era of bookbanning, bookblockading and—who knows—bookburning, the noon will bring an ill wind of good to those who supply the precious commodity. The less free people are to speak, the more time they spend in bookshops and libraries. It is hard to ban so many books that there is nothing left for the dealer to deal in, but they had a brave try in what was then Rhodesia. I have here the list of banned books, periodicals and records as of year's end 1970, and it doesn't leave a whole lot to chance, starting with Abrahams's *Tell Freedom*, Aldiss's *Hand-Reared Boy* and the Beatles Lyrics illustrated by Alan Aldridge. Sex, race, and rock 'n' roll: the triple motif is clearly stated in the opening bars. James Baldwin, Lenny Bruce and Jack Kerouac; *Hotel Orgy*, *The Liberation of Guiné*, *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up To Me*. Anything by Burroughs, anything with the words Black or Sexual or Freedom or any combination of the same, anything (it appears) in Swedish. *Eros in Capricorn* never stood a chance, any more than *Not Now, Sweet Desdemona*, *If this be Sexual Heresy*, or *The Literature and Thought of Modern Africa*. A bar on the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, on Plexus and Sexus but not on Nexus, on Whitestone Glamour Books numbers 83, 84, 85, 86 and 87, and a surprising lot of rugby songs and jokes, whose publishers probably thought they were on to a nice safe little earner in Salisbury. No room either for *The Origin of the Brunists* or *Absolute Beginners*, *Why are we in Vietnam*, and *Sock it to me*. Alice; or (fine demonstration of impartiality) W. B. Huie's *The Klansman*.

The list is strangely nostalgic today, with the dusty icons of abandoned revolutions: Simon

Vinkenoog and Franz Fanon, Phyllis and Eberhard Kronhausen, Sheikh Newzawi and Gaia Servadio. Susan J., Robbins H. and Collins J.: whatever happened to them? The Giger Man and Jan Cremer, Candy and Myra Breckinridge, all gone under the hill. The curtains have fallen on *O* as on *O! Calcutta*, and *Riot '71* no longer sounds like incitement.

You can hear the same music (those unheard are sweeter) in the list of banned records. *Hair* and Irish Rugby Songs, "The Freedom Singers Sing of Freedom Now" and "The Who, 'Je t'aime . . . moi non plus'" (seven inches of grunting and panting) and "Why I Am Ready to Die" by Nelson Mandela. But then 1970 is a long time ago.

★ ★ ★

It ill behoves, you may feel, someone who blunders about Pacific nations and their capitals to mock the errors of others, but I have always thought that I would prefer to be stoned by, as it were, fellow adulterers, than by a firing squad of those without sin (there might be fewer of them but their rocks would be given the added impetus of self-righteousness); or to put it another way, it would be a more sporting world if only people in glass houses threw stones. So I'm perfectly happy to jeer at one Michele Trochon whose catalogue contains or contained an offer of F. A. Dickinson's *Big Game Shooting on the Equator*, described as a precoushy document with an introduction by T. S. Eliot. Precoushy, with its Slavic sonorities, is one of those words that subverts linguistic norms—like likewise, you can't feel the same about the Woolfs when you learn that the Greeks render Bloomsbury as MPOLOUS-MPOURI. But still more subversive I think is the notion of Eliot as a secret big-game hunter, a name spoken with respect in the old Dry Salvages, the best watering hole in Dar, where they remember with awe what he did to the broad-backed hippopotamus, his keen nostril for the subtle effluence of cat, and the still untold story of him and Francis Macomber.

Letters

The Status of Psychoanalysis

Sir, — In his perceptive review of *The Spontaneous Gesture*, F. Robert Rodman's selection of letters by D. W. Winnicott, Peter Lomas (July 24) expresses views on the status of psychoanalytic theories that require comment. He writes that when assessing a scientific theory the personality of its author can be discounted: "but psychoanalysis is not a science, and anything that can help us to understand why its practitioners hold certain beliefs is worth considering." In view of the relevance of the psychoanalytic contribution to child development, it is essential that there should be adequate appreciation of its importance. For that purpose Lomas's remarks do a disservice, the more so as they come from a psychoanalyst.

All scientific theorizing is an imaginative process and so inevitably influenced by personal factors. In the so-called natural sciences the objective nature of the data makes it easy to judge the soundness of a particular theory. Because the data from psychoanalytic practice are both private and highly subjective, it is commonly held that psychoanalysis is thereby precluded from being a science, a view widely supported by Popper's dictum that its theories cannot be falsified. This latter statement is simply not true. Psychoanalytic theories have always been replaced when they have proved to be incompatible with fresh findings. A specific difficulty here is that whereas falsifying data can be obtained readily in laboratory experiments, ten to twenty years are required for analysts to assimilate and test new ideas in their practice. As a result changes are seldom noted by those outside the field.

The practice of psychoanalysis, like medicine, can never be primarily a scientific activity. It is a unique encounter in which two people combine to understand the self of one of them. The analyst has to make generaliza-

tions about behaviour at the personal level. Before Freud, views about human nature came mainly from the empathic and intuitive gifts of poets and writers. They will always make a unique contribution, one that we cannot dispense with, because of their sensitivity to the human scene. Freud's work created a method for extending the scope of conscious experience, but insights from practice are still produced by a poetic or creative imaginative activity. Winnicott is often described by analysts as having a highly poetic mind, yet a very large number of psychoanalysts and others are extremely grateful for his "beliefs" regarding the influence of the early family environment on the development of the person. Such insights are appraised and adopted in the light of further practice. Eventually they have to be transmuted by scientific procedures into validated knowledge.

Psychoanalysts have been notably slow in advancing this task. On the one hand it cannot be tackled adequately within the limitations of practice, but, perhaps more importantly, there has been a striking reluctance to replace Freud's assumptions based on nineteenth-century science by the modern biological theories that have made fundamental changes in the conceptions of what is scientific when the open systems that constitute living organisms come under closer scrutiny. The effect of their impact is well illustrated by John Bowlby's massive evidence built up over the past forty years. He has provided ample proof that theories about the early development of the person can be both verified and greatly enriched by studies using strictly scientific standards. His work arose out of his own creativity, and so it is the more significant that it supports almost all of Winnicott's "beliefs" despite the flaws in his personality that Lomas suggests should make for great caution in their adoption.

In the human sciences, the contributions of the poetic imagination, whether from the writer or the psychoanalyst, are the primary

source of our advances. The task of examining them scientifically requires the practitioner to change his role to that of scientist. The clarifications in this issue of the nature of science and its relation to practice are now leading to knowledge of child development that is scientific by any standard, and those concerned with its application to the evolution of soundly based mental-health measures can be reassured of its status.

JOHN D. SUTHERLAND,
3 Gilliland Road, Edinburgh.

A Threat to Latin

Sir, — Like most other modern historians, I had no regrets at the demise of Latin as a compulsory qualification for British arts degree courses. Not only had Latin long ceased to be necessary for the study of modern history but, for many students, the struggle to obtain the qualification induced a lifelong hatred of the language. A narrow functional approach did not work.

Now one form of compulsion and narrow functionalism is apparently to be replaced by another. Pupils at state, though not at private schools, are to be prevented from studying the classical languages as part of the national curriculum, presumably because only modern languages are regarded as economically necessary for the future workers who attend state schools. Latin and Greek are fit subjects only for the fee-paying elite.

It is particularly ironic that, freed from their role as mere entrance qualifications, these languages are now enjoying a renaissance at schools and universities, based on new teaching methods and a genuine interest among children of all ability groups in the language and culture of the ancient world. Latin, Ancient History and Classical Civilization are all popular among children at my local Inner London Education Authority comprehensive.

A Secretary of State for Education who professes to believe in choice is now to remove the choice to study the origins of our language and civilization; let us trust that he will think again.

RODERICK FLOOD,
21 Savernake Road, London NW3.

'Ausgepowert'

Sir, — George Steiner may well be right in criticizing Rainer Marwedel for using inappropriate language in his biography of Theodor Lessing (June 26). In citing *ausgepowert*, however, he does him an injustice. The word is not a neologism but has been part of the German political vocabulary for well over a century. It is not derived from the English *power* but from the French *pauvre* and is pronounced accordingly. It should therefore be rendered as "impoverished" rather than as "exhausted".

As the German princess is said to have remarked on the social question during Bismarck's time: "Die Armut kommt von der powerheit."

INGO MUSSI,
Tyrgatan 10, S-114 27 Stockholm.

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS ON

The TLS of August 15, 1912, carried a review of *Stewart Grahame's Where Socialism Failed*, from which these extracts are taken:

This is a curious and interesting account of a Socialistic colony established by Australians in South America about twenty years ago. The author says in his Introduction that he "slept over five hundred nights in a mud hut at New Australia", the name given to the settlement . . . The founder, William Lane, was evidently a very remarkable man . . . a sincere, ardent, and disinterested believer in the principles of Socialism, endowed with a "magnetic personality". He first came into prominence at the time of the London dock strike of 1889. He was then an influential Socialistic Journalist in Australia, and the contribution of £30,000 sent to the dock labourers from Brisbane is said to have been raised mainly by his efforts. The followers whom he collected to be the pioneers of his Utopia beyond the sea were "the pick of

Poets of Protest

Sir, — Christopher Hitchens (American notes, July 24) quotes Joseph Brodsky's characterization of Yevtushenko as "a weather vane. He throws stones only in directions that are officially sanctioned and approved." But it was Yevtushenko who swam against the unrelenting tide of antisemitism in Russia under Khrushchev by writing, declaiming and publishing *Baby Yar* (the ravine where some 70,000 Jews were massacred by the Nazis). The same régime that indicted and exiled Brodsky in 1964 had censored and censored the following protest by Yevtushenko three years earlier:

Let the Internationale thunder
when the lost anti-Semite on earth
is buried forever.
In my blood there is no Jewish blood.
In their callous rage all anti-Semites
must hate me now
as if I were a Jew.
And for that reason
I am a true Russian.

If Yevtushenko has softened or been softened since, is it necessarily that much more "unseemly and scandalous" than throwing stones at the author of such lines? The problems confronting a public figure in the Soviet Union must be quite different from those of a celebrated transatlantic intellectual, however shattered by past oppression or continuing deracination. Different, but possibly as complex and probably less negotiable.

Neither Brodsky nor Yevtushenko could seriously represent "all Russian poets", as Brodsky claimed Yevtushenko's membership of the American Academy suggests. But there are deeper senses in which any poet's words and actions represent poetry. If our work is to be valued as a harbinger of imagination, beauty and truth, let there be honour among poets.

MICHAEL HOROVITZ,
Poetry Olympics, Bisleigh, Gloucestershire.

Browning Translations

Sir, — Ian Jack says that the misattribution to Robert Browning of ten translations from Anacreon was corrected in 1984 in *The Browning Collections* (Letters, July 31). However, the information was first published in 1982, in the introduction to the Brownings' extant literary manuscripts compiled by Barbara Rosenbaum in the *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, Volume 3, part 1, page 107. The Huntington manuscript of "Aeschylus' Soliloquy" is also discussed there, with a facsimile provided as Plate 6.

MARGARET M. SMITH,
18 St John Street, Oxford.

Philip Larkin

Sir, — I have been asked by Faber and Faber to write a biography of Philip Larkin, and have the authorization of his executors. May I, please, through your columns appeal for anyone who has memories of or information about Philip Larkin to contact me at the address below?

ANDREW MOTTON,
10 Montague Road, London E8 2HW.

the working men of Queensland and New South Wales". "tank-sinkers, shears, bush carpenters, station-hands, with artisans used to the rough-and-tumble life of Australia". No better material for a settlement in a new country could be imagined. As the site of the colony Mr Lane obtained from the Government of Paraguay a hundred leagues of land, fertile, well-wooded, well-watered, conveniently situated, and healthy. Everything seemed to promise well; and the colonists looked forward to the enjoyment of an earthly paradise, untroubled by capital, competition and the wages system. These hopes were doomed to disappointment . . . Questions such as those sometimes put to apostles of Socialism by practically-minded inquirers — Who will do the scavenging and the washing up? — were not found to be easy of solution . . . In 1899 William Lane returned finally to Australia; and the Socialistic principle was soon afterwards practically abandoned . . .

COMMENTARY

Flow of fancy, depth of study

John Gage

Drawing in England from Hilliard to Hogarth
British Museum, until August 31

When Horace Walpole claimed, in the preface to his *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, that "Flambers and Holland have sent us the greatest men that we can boast", he had in mind very much the period represented by this splendid exhibition, whose euphonious title might lead us to expect a high proportion of native English talent, but whose content presents the work not only of many Netherlanders, but also of Germans, Frenchmen and Italians, and a Swede and a Spaniard as well. This means, perhaps (as Walpole also suspected), that there was no lack of patronage in seventeenth-century England, especially at Court, but that there was little provision for training artists until, in 1711, Sir Godfrey Kneller (a German) set up an informal academy in London, the first of the several which provided a forcing-ground for the rising British School.

Drawing was of course the fundamental of academic teaching, and this exhibition includes a number of "academy-studies" from these later years, notably a beautifully soft and relaxed chalk-drawing of a woman by Hogarth, who pointed out to the Vanderbank-Cheron Academy, off St Martin's Lane, where he studied, first introduced the female nude model to make it "the more inviting to subscribers". But drawing in this narrow sense is not what Lindsay Stanton and Christopher White, the arrangers of the exhibition and the authors of its richly illustrated and scholarly catalogue (255pp, British Museum Publications, £12.50 during the exhibition, £14.95 thereafter, 07141 1629 7) understand by the term, and they have cast their net very widely to include watercolours and pastels, a miniature by Hilliard and even a very painterly unfinished oil-sketch by

Hogarth. There is, too, something of a disjunction between the Italianate theory of drawing in England, discussed by Christopher White in the catalogue, and the more workaday, utility drawings – for portraits, for book-illustrations, for topography, for architecture and sculpture, – which we see. We find that artists in England rarely shared Roger North's view that

drawings are observed to have more of the spirit and force of art than finished paintings, for they come from either flow of fancy or depth of study, whereas all this or great part is wiped out with the pencil [brush], and acquires somewhat more heavy, than is in the drawings.

The empty bravura of Van Dyck or Kneller here has little either of "fancy" or "depth of study" and these qualities must be sought in far less obvious figures like the pastel-portraitist John Greenhill, or the remarkable Charles Beale, whose album of red chalk drawings, from the British Museum's own collection, can, alas, be shown extensively only in the catalogue. Beale, the son of a gifted portrait-painter, Mary Beale, made many studies of ordinary people "in character", which in their sometimes rather clumsy vigour remind us of Georges de la Tour. In him we see early signs of that "originality" which, in the strident propaganda of Hogarth, was to stamp the British School during the eighteenth century and in the Romantic period. Another "original", who, none the less, falls perilously close to the stereotype of Dutch bohemianism established in this century, is Isaac Fuller, whose course but very striking pen-and-ink self-portrait is witness to unconventional techniques and experimentation common to a number of English artists in the exhibition. Sir Peter Lely is reported as lamenting of Fuller, who liberally patronized the same taverns he decorated with mythological subjects, "that so great a genius should besot or neglect so great a talent".

In the realm of "fancy", Sir James Thornhill can certainly be seen in this exhibition to out-

shine in drawing as well as in painting his chief rivals as monumental decorators, Antonio Verrio and Louis Laguerre. One of its pleasant surprises is the demonstration of a strong and continuous tradition of Baroque decoration in Stuart England, from the masque settings of Inigo Jones to the great public and private schemes – for Chatsworth, for Petworth, for Greenwich Hospital – around the turn of the century. Thornhill's sprightly pen-and-wash studies for the ceilings of Wren's St Paul's show a firmness of composition as well as a sureness of execution which he may well have transmitted to his son-in-law, Hogarth. But although Hogarth learned much about large-scale figure-painting from Thornhill, he alone was able to carry this freshness of approach over into the handling of paint itself.

Not surprisingly, landscape turns out to have been a major field for draughtsmanship in seventeenth-century England. Hilliard's distinguished contributions to English scenery are in his Elizabethan work, and therefore outside the scope of this exhibition; and although Isaac Oliver might appropriately have contributed to it, the miniaturist tradition is represented here only by a late and daintily naïve watercolour of a pollard oak in Sussex by one John Dunstall. Otherwise the range is predictably various, from the blue-like study of moonlight by Inigo Jones (based on an engraving after Elsheimer) and one of a mysterious and beautiful group of gouaches depicting corners of woodland which used to be attributed to Van Dyck, but now seem to be closer to Frans Wouters, to Hollar's large tinted cartographic prospects of Tangier (then an English outpost), and a strange and even more meticulously "primitive" pen-drawing of a scene on the Rhine by John Talman, son of the architect. Among the most beautiful is Francis Place's "Dropping Well, Knaresborough, Yorkshire", in brown pen and grey wash, where the artist has sought, and found, graphic equivalents for those contrasts of tex-



Self-portrait by Isaac Fuller (1606?-1672), from the exhibition reviewed here.

ture, light and atmosphere which were to become such a preoccupation of English watercolourists a century later.

The exhibition, which makes us constantly want to look forward, closes with the earliest work of Hogarth, whom Lindsay Stanton, with pardonable exaggeration, characterizes as "the first British-born artist of undeniable genius". If he was not heir to anything like a tradition of English draughtsmanship (and was not himself a very remarkable draughtsman), this exhibition shows that he had behind him a body of excellent and varied drawing produced on these shores.

The exhibition can be seen at the Yale Center for British Art in New Haven from September 19 to November 8.

An abundance of incident

Richard Osborne

FRANCESCO CONTI
Don Chisciotte in Sierra Morena
GAETANO DONIZETTI
Il Pigmallione
GIOACHINO ROSSINI
L'occasione fa il ladro
Opera House, Buxton

"Mainly Spain" was the artistically tenuous theme of the ninth Buxton Festival. A children's workshop production of Manuel de Falla's *El reñabdo de mase Pedro* and an opera taken from Cervantes by a Vienna-based Florentine hardly constitute a festival of Spanish art; though the enterprising fringe programme included recitals by Victoria de los Angeles and Marisa Robles, and a celebration of the music of the court of Alfonso X by the Martin Best Ensemble; all of which, helped by a steady flow of Rioja, managed to conjure some semblance of a festive mood under the prevailing gloomy Derbyshire skies.

Conti's *Don Quixote in Sierra Morena*, performed here in a new English translation by the conductor, Anthony Hose, was written for the carnival at the Viennese Imperial Court in 1719. It became Conti's most celebrated work, not so much, one suspects, because of the quality of the musical invention as because of the opera's abundance of incident and closeness to Cervantes in the episodes it treats. Conti's libretto (thought to be by Apostolo Zeno and Pietro Pariati) attempts to give to the Cervantes narrative something of the pace and energy we associate with Shakespeare's Platonic comedies. With high and low-life characters, a quartet of lovers, and Quixote's misadventures with a shaving-bowl, a puppet show, wine-skins, and the Giant Pandafilando, the plotting is complex, the evening lengthy, well over three hours even without the original ballet music.

It is too lengthy, perhaps, given the absence in the music of the time of those larger focal

points and redirect dramatic energies, though Conti's often inventive use of recitative and his willingness to move the action forward even within the strait-jacket of the *da capo* aria to some extent alleviate the problem. The end is worth waiting for, the caged Quixote, quirkily noble to the last, addressing us with a mixture of pathos and zany energy that, for once, the music distils admirably from the Cervantes text.

Michael Geliot's production, functionally though not unattractively designed by Roger Butlin, has divided opinion between those who cannot tolerate pantomime and slapstick in eighteenth-century tragicommedia and those who, detecting some elements of self-parody in the text itself, are prepared to allow a little licence. It is difficult to take serious objection to Andrew Dalton's wicked Prince Fernando in Panama hat, mafioso suit, and Elizabethan ruff, or the Barbara Windsor-like serving wench of Meryl Drower. Some of the by-play was inept, however, and there were times when the production got in the way of subtler characterization. Eirinn Davies's Lucinda, brassy extrovert in a quasi-Arcadian role, was one of the production's casualties: Timothy Wilson, by contrast, largely escaped to give a generally distinguished performance of the romantic counter-tenor lead. Neill Archer's Quixote had rather too much the air of Robert Donat's Mr Chips, but the closing scenes were done with dignity, and whatever the distractions on stage, the playing of the Manchester Camerata under Anthony Hose rarely faltered through what was a long, eventful, often tiresome but ultimately rewarding evening.

The Rossini/Donizetti double bill, more Latin than Hispanic, made up the festival's other major operatic offering. Among early Rossini one-acters *L'inganno felice* is a fuller, subtler piece in urgent need of revival, but the choice of *L'occasione fa il ladro* (The occasion makes the thief) for performance in Buxton's delightfully intimate Opera House was a shrewd one. Rossini's seventh operatic commission, wedged between the substantial *La pietro del paragono* and the mystery *Il Signor*

Bruschino, it is amusing, vivacious, substantial though not over-long, and relatively easy on the budget: just six characters and no chorus, a significant consideration for a festival, even one as expert in winning sponsorship as Buxton currently is. If Buxton made a mistake, it was thinking it too brief a piece to fill an evening.

The preface here was Donizetti's *Il Pigmallione*, an early academic exercise written for Padre Mattei under Mayr's influence. Despite at least one generous melodic outburst and a charming ritornello for flute and strings as Pigmallion contemplates his statue, the piece, though musically continuous, is not stage-worthy, something exacerbated by Buxton's clumsy treatment of the statue (Jean Rigby to Jeffrey Talbot's Pigmallion) and historically wayward use of back-projections of drawings by Max Ernst.

The effect of *Il Pigmallione* was to throw the Rossini into even sharper relief. The plot of *L'occasione fa il ladro* is slight but neat. Count Alberto, who is travelling to Naples to see for the first time his rich bride-to-be, loses his luggage in a mix-up en route to an old adventurer, Don Parmenone, who decides to travel to Naples to impersonate the luggageless, passport-bereft Count. Since the bride-to-be has also decided on impersonation, swapping roles with her maid Ernestina the better to judge her would-be husband, there are many possibilities for farcical manoeuvrings. Rossini's response to the libretto is quick-witted and economical of gesture, the mordant orchestral accompaniment often quietly giving the fevered declamation of the characters.

All this needs the readiest response from the stage director. Timing is everything, as is an ability to use every scrap of the score – a dominant seventh here, a long-drawn *fermata* there – for comic effect. Malcolm Fraser's production achieved all this, witty, spirited, sharp-edged; let us hope that his now appointment in Cincinnati will not remove him entirely from the festival he has so notably inspired since its inception in 1979. Roger Butlin's designs shift the first scene from an inn to a mid-Victorian railway station whose elegant arches are later

transformed into part of the atrium of Don Eusebio's Neapolitan villa. Later, we move into his billiard-room, an extra scene-change not contemplated by Rossini, but expertly used by Mr Fraser who put the sacred baize to use unfamiliar even to Hurricane Higgins.

The comic double-act of Gordon Sandison's Parmenone and Steven Page's lanky, paranoïd servant, Martino, worked splendidly, and John Robertson was an amiable Eusebio. New to Britain is the young Latin American tenor *di grazia*, Abram Morales. He lacks as yet the liquid brilliance of a Juan Oncina or the young Nicolai Gedda, but he has the notes even if the tone is inclined to be metallic. Jean Rigby, dauntlessly alluring the moment she removed her steel spectacles and donned her mistress's gown, was a commanding Ernestina, no mere *seconda donna*. The evening was also a triumph for the talented young Claire Daniels, a late replacement, who seized her opportunity brilliantly in the dénouement where Rossini's predilection for ending with his leading lady very much centre-stage is more than hinted at.

Alan Freedman's translation is expert and lively and only once or twice reduced to quaint circumlocution to keep up with Prividall's furious rhyming. Anthony Hose conducted with the right degree of unaffected directness. Curiously, this was Buxton's first attempt at Rossini, a composer they should cultivate now that Glyndebourne has more or less ditched its once great tradition of Rossini interpretation.

Opera and the Uses of Language by Sandra Corse (160pp, Farnleigh Dickinson University Press/Associated University Presses, 25 Sicilian Avenue, London WC1A 2QH, £14.95, 0836 3300 5) examines six major operas by Mozart, Verdi and Britten. Corse maintains that the composers were closely concerned with the literary sources for their works, taking "a semi-literary form, the libretto, and adding literary 'language' in the form of music; and using "the resources of music to pull the language of their librettos out of communicative simplicity and into multivalence".

Going by the book

Lynn Struve

As in Taoist paradoxes, some of the best things result from some of the worst in China. Although many who ride the 103 bus along Wenjing Street each day are headed to or from the National Beijing Library, there is no stop near the lion-flanked outer gate of the imperiously broad and symmetrical library compound (the former grounds of the Emperor's stables). This, I was told, is because the offices of high government officials are located in the (also thickly walled) compound directly across the street, and a bus stop would pose a nuisance, as well as an unnecessary security risk. Thus, one alights from the 103 about a quarter of a mile away – but perhaps the most refreshing quarter-mile anywhere in the distinctly unrefreshing city of Beijing.

I always used that walk to compose my thoughts and feelings before entering the library labyrinth, in which minor lapses of attention to myriad procedures, regulations, request forms and points of etiquette could result in the loss of hours or days in research time, the loss of all or part of someone's "face", or, worst of all, the loss of one's temper, which, of course, would be proof patent of barbarism and cause only further frustration. Think: How many pockets, of what capacities, am I wearing today? Which ones, respectively, will accommodate the bag-check tally, the main-door tally, the photocopied tally, the periodicals-desk tally, the rare-books tally and the two tallies I will need to enter and exit the new wing? – not to mention my ID, coin purse, comb, handkerchief, toilet paper, thermos of boiled water, pencils, pencil-sharpener, notes and notepaper (since no purse, brief-case or zip folder may be brought into the cavernous but confining cluster of two-storey buildings).

How many such tallies and other items will have to be held by any one pocket at any given time? For instance, the photodup tally must be surrendered to redeem the periodicals-desk tally, which must be surrendered to redeem the main-door tally, which must be surrendered in order to cross the front courtyard and use the lavatory (embedded in the outermost wall), or to go somewhere during the two-hour noon "rest" period taken by most of the staff. Will the midday sun be warm enough to eat my *biandang* (the Chinese "brown-bag" lunch – mostly cold, cooked rice and leftovers in a small tin box) seated on one of the kneeling, marble beasts in the courtyard? Will there be another impromptu English class today in the lobby – where several patrons (usually translators looking for scientific and technical materials in Western languages) often gather round the lady professor from the "Beautiful Country" (*Meiguo*), who obligingly explains in Chinese the fine points of American usage while sipping lunchtime tea?

It's already 8.15 am. Will there be any seats left in the cramped Rare Books Reading Room? Will a functioning microfilm reader fall vacant, by chance, or will I have to wait for my reservation (made for the earliest free time, three weeks hence) to come due? What if none

of the books that I requested yesterday, or the day before – and which must be retrieved from depositories in other parts of town – has been found? (The idea of open stacks boggles the Chinese mind, as the parlour game of tallics boggles mine.) How could I, without effortfully persuading them to look again, considering that there are no available catalogues for the materials I want (mostly Chinese books and periodicals published before 1949, the year of the Communist Revolution), and my requests, thus, usually are "blind"? What if the books that have been found are kept from my grasp by those new staffers who still don't "understand circumstances" and woodenly insist that materials stamped "Internal [that is, domestic] Circulation [only]" may not be read by foreigners, even ones who have the check to stand there and point out, "I... am... inside... this... country!" Or will I deal again today with that conscientious young man at the Social Sciences counter, who last week sheepishly but forthrightly handed over a vivid reminder of the tyrannies of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: a laudatory biography, written in the 1950s, of a famous seventeenth-century patriotic martyr, which, for reasons best explained by specialists in the annals of Communist Chinese historiography, had its title-page covered with the following "Highest Directive" (in fuchsia):

All mistaken thinking, all poisonous weeds, all ox-and-serpent demons should be subjected to criticism and absolutely not be allowed to freely spread around. This book is written according to a feudalist and capitalist-class viewpoint. It wholly repudiates use of the proletarian viewpoint as a standard in evaluating historical figures....

Contrary to an impression among Westerners who have gone to China for reasons other than sightseeing, I do not believe that the Chinese generate regulations just to thwart the "big-nosed, hairy ones". Indeed, in most situations, and particularly in libraries, I observed that regulations were used to thwart the natives much more than they were to thwart me, the privileged "foreign guest". Moreover, the majority of irritating restrictions arise from a long-standing condition in China, which many Westerners understand abstractly, but which very few understand experientially: chronic scarcity – that is, a severely adverse ratio of population to resources, of demand to supply. Libraries are especially hard-pressed because of the traditional emphasis on literacy and the thirst for education, coupled with the shortage of good books published domestically and the difficulty of obtaining new books from abroad (in both cases, for a combination of economic and ideological reasons). Hence, the Chinese obsession with the possibility of theft of or from library materials, in spite of policies that limit patronage.

Although it is a "people's" library in that it serves the whole Chinese nation in some capacities (such as preserving at least one copy of almost everything published in China), the NBL is not a "public" library in the sense of being open to everyone. On my first day there, escorted by a representative of my "host unit" (a historical research institute, which had initiated application procedures for me two weeks earlier), a Chinese man shot a question over my shoulder to the impassive functionary who prepared library identification cards behind a small, square aperture: "Do you process any individual IDs?" "No. Absolutely none", was the sharp reply. The seeker then left, looking disappointed but not surprised. I pondered that simple exchange for some time before realizing that the patrons whom I was about to join were not individual readers but agents of various production or education units, which had applied for access to the library because of certain attestable unit needs. Correspondingly, infringements of the written and unwritten rules affect not just single persons, but whole groups. How daring of my host unit, I thought, to entrust me with upholding the institution's reputation in these venerable precincts!

Access to anything desirable in China, especially information, is determined by one's "qualifications", which are established (or undermined) in a whole spectrum of ways from the most overt to the most subtle. Of course, there are the application forms, which indicate one's home institution, academic rank (very important in hierarchical Chinese society) and host unit, which occupies a certain place in the

domestic pecking order. Among mandatory accompanying documents are a statement of one's research topic and a list of specific titles sought at the library, both of which should be formulated as carefully as were memorials to the imperial throne. A topic too broad will suggest that one is on a "fishing expedition", whereas a topic too narrow can result in certain materials being withheld as outside the range of one's authorized inquiry. The list of titles should not be indiscriminately long, nor so short that the library might claim it has nothing you need. That would spell an early end to one's quest, since there is no admittance for browsing.

Successful running of the admissions gauntlet gets one through the front door but does not guarantee the maximum of permissible access. That requires establishing credence with the staff members, who are keen to discern whether one is a real scholar, by Chinese lights. Western researchers who can scarcely emit a phrase of Mandarin without faltering or strewing malapropisms, and whose calligraphy looks like a parody of the scratches left on oracle bones, but who, nevertheless, expect to be treated with respect by the staffers, engage in a self-defeating form of cultural obtuseness. Moreover, the spoken and written languages are only somewhat more important than the body language: does she cultivate that deferential Confucian stoop and bland tone of voice, refrain from gross gesticulations and facial expressions, exude a mild affability yet seriousness of purpose, and handle old books with a care bordering on reverence (regardless of how the staffers throw them about)? If one evinces a sincere willingness to learn, to abide by the rules and never ask why, then doors and drawers open, texts and goodwill circulate, in an atmosphere suffused with the aroma of preservative camphor.

The overabundance of regulations in China is generated by pervasive fears of censure or of disorder, which have deep cultural causes: regimentation to the Chinese is simply a lesser evil. But, in my experience, they seemed to love ignoring the rules, when it was thought safe to do so. Once, (not having got anywhere by citing recent evidence to the contrary), I had acquiesced in the unit head's claim that absolutely no rare item was permitted to be copied in its entirety, and had grudgingly ordered a partial, paper copy from the microfilm of one cord-bound, seventeenth-century chronicle. When I returned on the appointed day (weeks earlier than the rules stipulated) to pay the fee and take possession, I found that the copy-boy had reproduced not only the entire work, but also the entire set in which the work survived; moreover, he had figured the cost of the job at a much lower rate than should have been applied for a rare item of that sort. The ladies who supervised that unit soon figured out just what had happened. "Should I return the extra parts, or pay an additional fee?" I asked, bald-faced. "No, no. Congratulations!" they whispered heartily, barely controlling their laughter. And off I hastened.

Often problems such as this one arise because lower-level service personnel cannot actually read, or do not adequately understand the nature of, old editions and manuscripts, or, indeed, anything not written or printed in the simplified characters that became standard in the People's Republic of China in the mid-1950s. In fact, not only are most pre-1949 writings kept off-limits to the average citizen, but even those who do have access – for instance, professional historians – can read them only with difficulty or after special training. Both "complicated" characters and the grammatical structures in which they take on meaning in traditional-style scholarly writing (*wenyan*), are now alien even to most graduates of colleges and universities. Because the Communist Revolution, and especially the Cultural Revolution, stigmatized anything associated with intellectuals and encouraged people to write exactly as they spoke (that is, in reams of prolix jargon), cultural institutions such as libraries and museums had to begin schooling their employees in *wenyan* when operations resumed again in the late 1970s. Such a thorough severance of educated-Chinese people from everything in their literary heritage has not occurred since the third century BC, and thus marks the end of probably the longest and richest case of "lexicographical" and semantic "contiguity" in world history.

Literacy in *wenyan*, however, is easier to regain than bibliographic erudition. Instruction in the identification, authentication, reconstruction, cataloguing and use of old books was so long interrupted that there is little prospect of full recovery. One morning shortly after I began working at the NBL, I was summoned to meet a renowned, elderly bibliographer there. He apologized for not seeing me sooner, and explained that, being retired, he usually came to work only three days a week. In reply to my expression of admiration for his stamina and dedication, he said, "I have to come. We receive reference queries here from all over the country, and I'm the only one who knows the old materials." Preservation skills and bibliographical scholarship in China have improved markedly since that time, a scant three years ago. But the losses – due to the destructions and dislocations of the Anti-Japanese War, as well as to civil war and other domestic political upheavals – have been great. One especially rare and valuable history held at the NBL, which was on my short list of "must-find" items in the People's Republic of China, like many of the elderly bibliographer's peers, had not survived decades of abuse and neglect and had crumbled into a pile of flakes and dust.

By 1990 the new and more capacious NBL, which has been under construction on White Stone Bridge Road west of the city, should be ready for use. But I hope that, as is rumoured, the rare materials and traditional-style books – my stuff – will be kept in the old complex (with new atmosphere-control) which has served as the premier library of China since 1931. The old NBL is like a greying spouse with whom one, at some pains, has learnt to spar affectionately. I would miss the challenge of dealing with its foibles – not to mention, during the staffers' siesta, paddling among the water-lilies that ring the lake of the Beihai ("North Sea") Park.

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Knowing them by what they read

J. F. Fuggles

E. S. LEEDHAM-GREEN
Books in Cambridge Inventories: Book-lists from Vice-Chancellor's Court probate inventories in the Tudor and Stuart periods
Volume One: Inventories. 649pp. £75.
Volume Two: Catalogues. 861pp. £75.
Cambridge University Press.
0 521 30873 9 and 0 521 30888 7
SARGENT BUSH, JR. and CARL J. RASMUSSEN
The Library of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1584-1637
223pp. Cambridge University Press. £37.50.
0 521 30846 1

The use of evidence provided by the contents of someone's library, not only for the intellectual life of an individual but also for trends in scholarship, in general, has been neglected for too long. Making too much of library lists can be dangerous, of course: the presence of a book does not mean it was read – we all buy books we don't read, we are all given books we don't want; the absence of a book may equally be entirely adventitious. But that's no excuse for not working on book-lists and what they mean. E. S. Leedham-Green's remarkable piece of

work, *Books in Cambridge Inventories*, has provided an enormous amount of raw material for historians of the University of Cambridge as well as for historians of the history of ideas.

In 1521 Parliament decided that inventories of all goods should be taken by officers of the probate courts – chiefly so that beneficiaries could decline legacies which involved more debts than assets. Dr Leedham-Green has transcribed such of the Cambridge University inventories as have survived – none before 1535, precious few after 1621 (and how many are missing in that hundred years?) We have yet, though, 200 inventories to get our teeth into: inventories not only of students and graduates, but also of "privileged persons" – servants of the university and colleges (like laundresses) – and their relics. As well as transcribing the lists the editor has done her best to identify the books, and in Volume Two there is an analysis by author: those lists including Aulus Gellius, those Domingo de Soto, those Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and so on.

Dr Leedham-Green admits that her introduction cannot be long enough to lay out the general or detailed implications of the lists given. She does, though, offer some interesting observations in her brief comments on, say, the lists of the stationers whose property fell within the jurisdiction of the Vice-Chancellor's

Court, as well as offering wise words on the limitations of the material: did the appraisers, for example, exercise what she calls "benevolent censorship" at dangerous times? did they suppress evidence of heretical books? how partial is their work?

Each list is preceded by a short biography of the deceased, taken generally from J. A. Venn's *Alumni Cantabrigienses*; the editor makes her own contribution by selecting details of other chattels than books, which give a vivid picture of the man and the way he lived: Geoffrey Blythe (d 1542) was "surrounded by feather beds and cushions", John Thomas (d 1545) left a prodigious quantity of apparel, much of it "eaten with ratters", Thomas Burbanke (d 1550) a "kanapye for gnattees" – a mosquito net. She notes carefully all instruments, whether surgical or musical, and gathers them together, like the books, in Volume Two. She has a good eye. She has a good ear too, and the introduction and editorial matter are a pleasure to read. Producing this book has been a huge task: someone should be encouraged to do the same for Oxford – the lists have been transcribed and are available in Bodley, as yet unedited.

Cambridge seems to have stolen a march, also, in producing histories of college libraries. After Philip Gaskell's on Trinity (reviewed in the TLS, April 24, 1981) we now have, in *The*

Library of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1584-1637, an edition of the early inventories for Emmanuel. The college was interesting from its foundation because of its extreme Puritan leanings. Members were prominent among the settlers in the New World (including John Harvard), and during the Commonwealth no fewer than twelve heads of house in Cambridge were Emmanuel men. The library was large for the early seventeenth century, with almost 500 books (Trinity had about 325 in 1600), and was arranged in the "modern" way, unchained from the start. Perhaps unusually, the college, founded in 1584, produced seven inventories by 1637. Sargent Bush, Jr. and Carl J. Rasmussen print the last, and fullest, of that year, using the earlier lists to show the development of the collection. It was by no means narrowly Puritan: it is quite clear that by the 1620s deliberate steps were being taken here, as in other colleges, to buy the Catholic controversialists – they had realised that it was important to know what the enemy was saying. The editors provide a short, but by no means inadequate, introduction which provides some commentary on donations and analyses the collection; and the book is well illustrated. Curiously, shelf-marks of surviving books are given in each entry: if anyone wants to steal the 1565, Louvain quarto of St Prosper of Aquitaine he now knows where to find it.

Part(s) of a picture-cycle

Robin Cormack

KURT WEITZMANN and HERBERT L. KESSLER
The Cotton Genesis: British Library Codex Cotton Otho B. VI
250pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £100.10.
0691 04031 1

This is a dry account of a burnt manuscript. The reader of *The Cotton Genesis* by Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert L. Kessler is bound to be impressed by the importance of the medieval illustrated book which merits such a lavish publication of its charred fragments by Princeton University Press, yet may reach the end without feeling certain in what this importance lies. It is clear that the venture brings to an end a protracted phase of scholarship that has been marked by pleas for "a thorough reconstructive study" of this manuscript of the Book of Genesis.

The manuscript, acquired in the seventeenth century by that phenomenal collector Sir Robert Cotton (the owner of Magna Charta and the Lindisfarne Gospels among others), was burnt in a fire in London in 1731 – after it had finally passed into public ownership in accordance with Cotton's wishes, but before the House of Commons woke up to the value of the collection and the need to house it securely; what survives of the Cottonian Library now forms a significant section of the British Library. Before the fire, the manuscript apparently consisted of one volume (33 x 25 cm) with some 166 folios, containing the text of Genesis in Greek uncials, interspersed with many miniatures, predominantly narrative in character and placed after the passages to which they referred. Since the fire, a few wrinkled and scorched pieces of parchment are all that remain to be studied. The existence of a number of copies of the pages of the manuscript before and after this damage, however, as well as the existence of some medieval works of art which "copy" the manuscript, or at least reproduce scenes of a similar kind, have encouraged Professors Weitzmann and Kessler to deduce the appearance of the original. They believe – although with very little clear evidence – that it was produced in Egypt in the late fifth century.

The nucleus of their study is a reconstruction of the original manuscript. Its pages are described and illustrated with the help of sketch drawings; there are photographs of the fragments, copies from various dates and illustrations of comparative medieval evidence. Their conclusions about the original number of pictures and the arrangement of the text around them seem practical and convincing. The method of the publication of the results is less

elegant. The reconstruction drawings have awkwardly to be compared with written descriptions (on other pages) and with the scaled figures; and, amazingly for an art historical publication, these reconstructions leave entirely blank the pictorial areas. The Greek text in the reconstructions is untidily written (not always matching what can be seen in the photographs) and it is palaeographically misleading. The most recent drawings recording the fragments, made for this publication, conjure up ghostly images of the miniatures, reminiscent of the work of Mervyn Peake.

Weitzmann and Kessler's painstaking work will act as a major contribution to studies of the Early Christian book. Their own comments on the character of the book are relatively limited in scope – essentially a short, but stimulating, statement on the "literariness" of the illustration in relation to the text. Their assumptions about the nature of book illustration do emerge on occasion. They use the traditional vocabulary of the textual critic concerned with the construction of stemmata. So they speak of this book as not itself the "archetypal cycle", but an "emended copy of an earlier set of Genesis illustrations", as "an intelligent revision of the archetypal cycle" and as "a careful revision of the imagery, fully within the spirit of the original". They also regard the manuscript as a "source mined throughout the Middle Ages", though "layer copyists often did not comprehend the full meaning of extra-biblical features that would have added special meaning". This kind of assessment is in line with other writings of Weitzmann. It relies on a close analogy between the way texts might have been transmitted through copying and the transmission of pictures; it sees the great period of invention in Christian art as the first few centuries, and later medieval book illumination as a weaker reflection of encyclopaedic (usually lost) early "sources".

Even in its fragmentary state the Cotton Genesis shows how problematic is the analogy between text and pictures, and how inappropriate to visual images are ideas about "correct" or "incorrect" reproduction. A clear example of the fluid, even dynamic, relationship between visual image and source can be found in the thirteenth-century mosaics of the church of San Marco in Venice. These "copied" the miniatures of the Cotton Genesis, but in the process transformed them; the most important aspect for understanding the power of the mosaics is the "accuracy" of their reproduction. Here, as elsewhere, the stress of Weitzmann's methodology on the mechanics of copying serves only to conceal the effect of medieval images as they are preserved. The value of the reconstructed Cotton Genesis for the understanding of Early Christian art is even greater than the account in this publication at first suggests.

Visions and revisions

Andrew Wilton

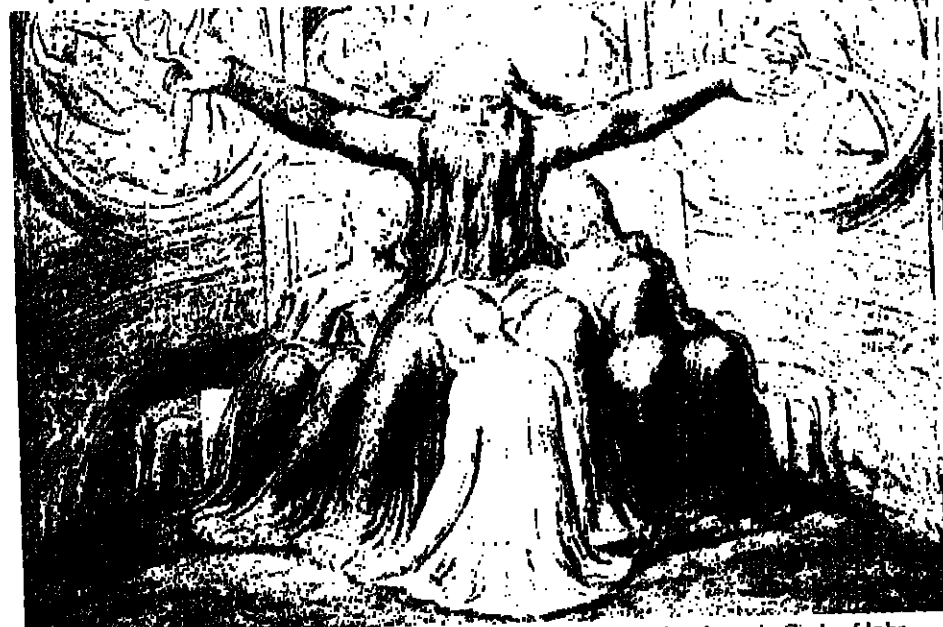
DAVID BINDMAN (Editor)
William Blake's Illustrations of the Book of Job
Part One, Text volume. 148pp.
Part Two, The plates. 24pp. with 53pp of reproductions and 22 plates.
Colour Versions of Blake's Book of Job Designs
from the Circle of John Linnell
28pp. with 48 plates.
William Blake, 90 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PY. For prices, see penultimate paragraph of the review below.

This pair of sumptuously produced boxes of facsimiles, with their attendant critical matter, is dedicated "To the memory of Arnold Fawcus and Geoffrey Keynes", and represents an act of piety by the newly reconstituted William Blake Trust in honour of its two most prominent and influential members. Facsimiles of the Job engravings, and of the hand-coloured set of them in the Collins collection, had been made before the deaths of Mr Fawcus and Sir Geoffrey Keynes, together with facsimiles of the watercolours now in Paul Mellon's collection, which are known, from their provenance, as the New Zealand set. A problem had arisen, however: Sir Geoffrey's ardent conviction that the New Zealand set was the work of Blake himself had come to be doubted by other Blake scholars; both Bo Lindberg, who had already written a lengthy examination of the drawings for the Trust, and David Bindman, who was now appointed editor, were convinced that they were inferior work by another hand: copies, in short. In this conviction they are surely correct. The history of the drawings makes it probable that they were the work of a member of the Linnell family; there seems little reason to think, as Lindberg suggests, that one or two of them might have been touched by Blake himself.

An important part of Keynes's purpose in initiating this publication was to integrate the New Zealand drawings into the history of the Job series as a whole; so there is a huge irony in the fact that this work, conceived as "a worthy memorial to that great Blake scholar", is founded on a denial of Keynes's central and most interesting thesis. As a result, Keynes himself takes the role of the patriarch betrayed by his friends, the object of his faith shattered: a posthumous embodiment of the Blakean myth as Bindman here reinterprets it, with Job personifying fallen man, proud in his allegiance to a false god who is eventually revealed as cloven-footed. He can be redeemed only through his gradual understanding of the salvation offered by Christ. The careful exegesis of Bindman and Lindberg, politely contradicting everything that Keynes proposes in his own essay (piously retained from the original

scheme) must constitute the great man's redemption.

Another important point misunderstood by Keynes was the place of the authentic set of watercolour designs for Job made by Blake for his patron Thomas Butts and preserved in the Pierpont Morgan Library. These are now considered to date from the first decade of the nineteenth century, instead of the third, so that the period of gestation of *Job* is much longer than Keynes imagined. Many of its central ideas, both visual and literary, spring from Blake's thinking just after his sojourn at Felpham, and not from the years of his old age. It is from this fact that Bindman derives his authority to argue that the work is specifically concerned with the redemptive power of Christ, a theme much in Blake's mind at the time of the Bible illustrations, executed for Butts again, which also belong to the early



A detail from one of the plates in *Colour Versions of Blake's Book of Job Designs* from the Circle of John Linnell, reviewed here.

Moral advertisements

J. B. Trapp

ANDREAS ALCIATI
Index Emblematicus: Volume One, The Latin Emblems, Indexes and Lists
Edited by Peter M. Daly and Virginia Callahan, assisted by Simon Cuttler
231pp. plus 212 emblems.
Volume Two, Emblems in Translation
Edited by Peter M. Daly, assisted by Simon Cuttler
212 emblems, each in four translations.
University of Toronto Press. £87.50 (the set). 080202425 4
KARL JOSEF HÖLTGEN
Aspects of the Emblem: Studies in the English Emblem tradition and the European context
205pp. Kassel: Reichenberger. DM75.
0923593 35 X

Emblems, said Nathaniel Webbe roundly in 1585, are "general conceits of moral matters", their wholesome message hammered home to the beholder's mind by a threefold blow from maxim, motto, illustrative picture and explanatory epigram, their three canonical parts. What I tell you three times is true. According to the same authority, emblems differ from *imprese* or devices, which more riddlingly "manifest the special purpose of gentlemen", *imprese*, indeed, are more heraldic in character and – though they may need and are often given explanation – they usually consist of two elements only: motto and simplified picture. Both genres were popular in the Renaissance, sharing the semiotic function of making invisible things understood by things that are, and making them understood more clearly, memorably and effectively because conceptual, visual and verbal dimensions are involved.

By common consent the Milanese jurist Andrea Alciati is the first emblemist in the true sense – somewhat inadvertently, since the pictures attached to his Latin epigrams in the first edition of his *Emblemata*, printed at Augsburg, away from his supervision, in 1531, seem to have been supplied by another hand.

The result went through something like 175 editions in the original Latin and in French, German, Italian and Spanish translation – by far the most frequently issued emblem book. Imitators from all these nations, with England joining in, swelled the total number of such books to a thousand. To some extent the popularity of emblems merely reflects a taste for encapsulated wisdom and a general agreement on the moral function of literature.

The twentieth-century pioneer in the study of the phenomenon was Mario Praz, whose *Studi sul concettismo* of 1934 was followed by the two volumes he published with the Warburg Institute in 1948 (second edition, Rome 1964). Since Praz, an enormous amount of scholarly work has been done and – among other things – a huge anthology, *Emblemata*, compiled by A. Henkel and A. Schöne (1969-76). Peter M. Daly's enterprise is the largest yet: a comprehensive, computer-aided *Index Emblematicus*, the next step on the road to exhaustive documentation. He has attracted eager collaborators in every European country, international emblem congresses flourish, and the first issue of a new journal, *Emblematica* (reviewed in the TLS of June 12), has just been published. In short, another recognized academic specialism, the study of emblems, has been added to the pile.

Professor Daly and his collaborators, in their extended Alciati, have given the *Index Emblematicus* the best and most useful of bases. In Volume One, a brief life of Alciati is followed by a useful list of writings about him in his capacity as an emblemist (his larger life's work was as a jurist). There are analytic subject indexes to the woodcuts in his book and to the themes of the emblems; concordance indexes to mottoes and epigrams in the various languages and to the English translations of them which are provided; alphabetical and sequential lists of mottoes in all languages; together with a comparative list which not only shows the placing of each emblem, relative to the base-text of Alciati's original, in the French (the base-text of the editions of 1536, 1549 and 1569-74), the German (1542 supplemented from 1567), the Italian (1551 and 1606) and the

Spanish (1549) editions, but also notes the adaptations of eighty-six of Alciati's emblems in the nearest approach to an English translation – Geoffrey Whitney's *Choice of Emblems*, published in 1583 at Antwerp.

The printing of Alciati chosen as base-text for this apparatus, to complete Volume One, is that of Padua, 1621. This is given page by page in reduced facsimile, with English translations of motto and epigram, a description of the woodcut and a definition of the subject of the emblem to one side. As the fullest Latin version, easily accessible now in separate facsimile – which will supply the absence from Daly's volumes of its substantial commentary, based on that of Claude Mignault, first printed in 1571 – the Padua edition was a sensible and pragmatic choice. Use of an earlier printing would have entailed much more complicated addition-and-subtraction sums to relate that to the vernacular translations. Moreover, anyone who has worked with emblems soon learns to start with the Padua edition and work back or forward from it, as necessary.

Volume Two is occupied by facsimiles of the editions in other languages, with English translations of mottoes and epigrams. The end result, achieved with enormous labour, seems both accurate and comprehensive, a most valuable *instrument de travail*. To be ungracious, the thousand facsimiles of pictures and epigrams are often not very legible. To be fair, on the other hand, they are often not much more legible, and certainly no prettier, in the larger format of the original editions. The work has been carried so far that one occasionally wishes it had been carried a little further. Alciati's first emblem, for example, is the Visconti viper, which all the texts call merely "serpent" – so "serpent", or rather "snake", it is throughout. The compilers can retort that their aim was a literal faithfulness to what they saw on the page. One wishes their enterprise good continuance.

Karl Josef Höltgen's *Aspects of the Emblem*, weighing in at a twelfth of the Toronto Alciati, is more of a sprinter (not quite qualified for a maiden event, since some of the essays revisit ground that his author has already covered).

years of the century. So one cannot help wishing that it was the Butts watercolours for Job that were so faithfully reproduced in *Colour Versions of the Book of Job Designs*, and not the spurious New Zealand set – which has already been printed in facsimile once (in 1935). The Butts set appears, it is true, in black-and-white among the comparative illustrations in the facsimiles accompanying the (uncoloured) *Illustrations of the Book of Job*; there we are also given the preliminary pencil drawings from the Riches sketchbook in the Fitzwilliam Museum, as well as, yet again (for ease of reference), the New Zealand set – which was apparently executed at a moment just prior to the final engravings and so provides clues as to their evolution.

The exegetical matter supplied by Lindberg with each plate, the very full catalogue by Robert Essick of states and printings of the series, and Barbara Bryant's comprehensive dossier of documentary and bibliographical records up to 1892, together ensure that Blake's *Job* is now as reliably and completely nailed down by scholarship as it is ever likely to be. At a modest £295, the "serviceably bound" edition, restricted to libraries and educational, eleemosynary institutions, is a bargain; while 250 copies, bound in half morocco with marbled boards in a double slip-case, are available at £580. Only the most demanding need pay £1,600 for one of the twenty-two de luxe copies, with each of which is included a hand-coloured facsimile of a subject from the Butts set and a label from Linnell's original publication.

It may be that the piety that has informed this enterprise is somewhat misplaced; and one may question whether it is really necessary to be at such expense to provide the world with yet another, not markedly superior, facsimile of the already frequently reproduced *Job*. But thanks to the scrupulous good sense of the reincarnate Blake Trust the project has, after all, found something like full justification.

All the same, the new detail he is able to add is valuable in itself.

Höltgen's reconsideration of Quarles's *Emblems*, first published in 1635, which has been called the most popular book of English verse of the seventeenth century, is instructive in its account of the use by Protestant and Catholic alike of one specific emblem. This usefully calls in question much of the substructure on which claims for a distinctively Protestant poetic have recently been advanced. In the Kassel *impresa* manuscripts he finds new collateral evidence for contemporary use of the famous compasses image of Donne's "Valediction forbidding Mourning". He adds to his earlier discoveries about Richard Haydocke and about Haydocke's designs for emblematic title-pages and monumental brasses, and he concludes with a magisterial and too brief survey of the Victorian emblematic revival. Here he rightly stresses the religious dimension – there were twenty nineteenth-century editions of Quarles – without losing sight of its aesthetic and antiquarian sides, or of the secular re-use of, for example, older emblems of unity in trade union banners and the like.

Among the good things offered in Professor Höltgen's little book is an insistence on the importance of the Jesuits in the change from the predominantly secular-moral to the predominantly religious emblem. As he shows, this is chiefly a late-sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century affair, though religious emblems exist in the fifteenth century. He might, perhaps, have laid more stress on the oratorical-exemplary tradition. Piccinelli's *Monito simbolico*, that emblematic treasury without pictures, was intended as a preacher's manual, and to that end was translated into Latin by a Jesuit; and the Paduan Alciati of 1621 itself was meant as a preaching as well as a meditative aid. Such books were intended for somewhat the same combination of mediative, oratorical and educational use as the allied riddles and enigmas later employed by the Society of Jesus – to which Jennifer Montagu devoted a brilliant article some years ago. This is an excellent and diverting collection of essays.

Any addition to the small number of monographs on individual British bookbinders is welcome. Of the two most recent, one is devoted to a living binder, the other to a firm well known for over a century.

Joseph Zaehnsdorf was one of the latest to arrive of the German-speaking binders who reinvented the London trade in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Born in Pest in 1814, he spent *Wanderjahre*, in the German tradition, working in Switzerland, Germany and France, before reaching London, where his brother already manufactured jewellery, in 1837. There he was employed for a time by one of William Beckford's last binders, John MacKenzie; after making a brief foray into "toilette furniture", he set up in business as a binder on his own account in about 1842. The early years, marked by several changes of address, seem to have been difficult ones, but by the late 1850s he was well established. In the following two decades the firm, by then employing a large proportion of non-union foreign workers, consolidated its reputation, attested by the medals awarded at international exhibitions which served to decorate its letterheads.

The Zaehnsdorfs' forwarding was of excellent quality. Their finishing tended to follow antiquarian patterns in what an advertisement of 1874 called "the Monastic, Crollier, Maioli and Illuminated Styles". In this they were only providing what their clients wanted. Contemporary French collectors were commissioning exactly the same sort of intricate inlaid covers from binders such as Chambolle or Loric.

Not all Zaehnsdorf bindings were elaborately decorated. In 1880, *The Art of Bookbinding* by Joseph Zaehnsdorf's son, Joseph William, was published. The author's copy was plainly bound in purple morocco, lettered on the spine but with no other gilding on the covers. The book was well received. Another German immigrant, the great Bernard Quaritch, recalled that "In former times I used to give your father lessons in Taste"; Henry Sotheran promised "to devote half-an-

hour now and then to its full perusal"; and a working binder signing himself "Bibliopegus impecuniosus" expressed the hope that "it will circulate among the upper classes as it is calculated to elevate their taste for good Bookbinding".

The business remained in family ownership until 1947. It was subsequently acquired by Hatchards and after a period of dormancy has been revived under its original name.

Frank Broomhead, in *The Zaehnsdorfs (1842-1947): Craft bookbinders*, provides a competent narrative of the firm's history – though Latin titles give him trouble. But it is disappointing that only ten bindings are reproduced. No attempt is made to trace stylistic development, and the later and less derivative work is almost entirely unrepresented.

Until her retirement three years ago, Elizabeth Greenhill had been binding for almost sixty years. She trained under Pierre Legrain in Paris and Douglas Cockerell in London, and has served as Secretary, and from 1975 as President, of Designer Bookbinders. *Elizabeth Greenhill, Bookbinder* contains a short but delightful autobiographical sketch, tributes from a collector, two librarians and a former lecturer in bibliography, and a catalogue of her "fine" bindings. Her work as a conservator and restorer, which included several months in the chilly Fortezza di Belvedere repairing books that had been immersed in the Arno flood at Florence in 1966, is not illustrated.

The book lists 104 bindings, and all but nine are reproduced, the great majority in colour. A sense of movement is much in evidence: the drift of clouds, flicker of flames, play of light on water. Miss Greenhill is a master of lettering, seen to full advantage on some covers where the title in bold capitals is the sole or the principal feature. Reproductions alone cannot of course do justice to these volumes. They must be handled for their tactile pleasures and functional merits to be appreciated. Meanwhile the Scottish publishers, Kulgin Duval and Colin Hamilton, booksellers and patrons of modern binding, are to be congratulated on providing an admirable record of a sensitive and original artist.

A Manual of Local Studies Librarianship, edited by Michael Dewe (419pp. Aldershot: Gower. £45. 0 566 03522 7), aims to provide an updating of J. L. Hobbs's *Local History and the Library* (second edition 1973). The subject is seen very much in a public library context, but university, polytechnic and college libraries are also covered – an important addition since the educational role of local studies, at all levels, is increasingly recognized. Full attention is given to the organization and bibliographical control of local studies collections and to their educational use in the community.

The language we deserve

Michael Wood

KENNETH G. WILSON
Rip Van Winkle's Return: Change in American English 1966-1986
183pp. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, distributed in the UK by Trevor Brown Associates. £13 (paperback), £7.95. 087451 4118

"Our language will always serve our purposes", Kenneth G. Wilson writes in *Rip Van Winkle's Return* - "all our purposes." He gets firmer on this topic as his book continues. "We get the language we need and want and - perhaps - deserve", he says on an early page, but later decides Edwin Newman is "certainly right" to urge that "people get the language they deserve". "Language is the measure of us." This can be a depressing thought if you look at language closely, but Wilson remains remarkably cheerful throughout. He is an American college teacher of English who turned administrator for fifteen years, and recently went back to teaching. Hence the Rip Van Winkle whimsy. His sleep was his absence from language study, and he is here to report on what he discovered when he woke. He finds this conceit a good deal more entertaining than we may, and rides it and a handful of other limp metaphors very hard. He repeats himself rather complacently, as if nagging at his students, and he comments on his own usage in some fussy footnotes. He worries about *cops*, for instance, which some dictionaries call slang or informal. "*Police* and *police* seemed too stuffy for my needs here. How did it strike you? Too unbuttoned?" Nice of him to ask, but unwise. *Cops* is fine, but *unbuttoned* is awful, an affectation of easy youthfulness.

Van Wilson's discoveries will not surprise you. You would have to have been asleep to think some of these points were worth making. People swear more than they used to. Swearing

is more freely tolerated. Dictionaries are big business. Regional accents are fading, and people speak more and more similarly. This is - wait for it - perhaps the effect of social mobility and television. In language as elsewhere, old folks resist change while young folks try to speed it up, and middle-aged folks dither. The battle between linguistic generations - this is one of Wilson's bolder claims - is a greater battle than the one between the sexes.

If this were all the book said or suggested we could let it go as an amiable academic ramble. But there are other, more interesting things in it: plenty of shrewd and amused sense amid the obviousness; some deeper questions haunting the edges of its argument; a curious hidden agenda. On the subject of language and sexual difference, for example, Wilson is intelligent and informed, and only slightly inclined to *laissez-faire*. He implicitly upends his claim that the battle between the generations is more important, since he has nothing of importance, or even interest, to say about that. He is tolerant and understanding about spelling ("mostly a neuromuscular skill" which you either have or haven't, like a talent for golf or running), picks up some charming errors ("towing the line", "unmitigated gaul"), and quotes Veblen's withering comments on conspicuous waste:

English orthography satisfies all the requirements of the canons of respectability under the law of conspicuous waste. It is archaic, cumbersome, and ineffective; its acquisition consumes much time and effort; failure to acquire it is easy of detection. Therefore it is the first and readiest test of respectability in learning, and conformity to its ritual is indispensable to a blameless scholastic life.

Wilson notes that words like *screw-up* ("a stupid mistake; blunder" - the evasive politeness of dictionaries is a subject in its own right) may help to make *screwing* more respectable, at least linguistically; sees that a *shit list* is no longer obscene (because there are so many of them around?), and that *notorious*, in America, has lost most of its pejorative flavour and means mainly famous or talked about. We shall have to retitle the Hitchcock movie. Racially derogatory terms, Wilson thinks, are very much on the out, a sign that our society is actually becoming less permissive in some

areas. His examples from dictionaries show a lunatic caution about such terms. *Honky* is said to be "used esp. by blacks"; and *kike* is "usu. taken to be offensive". That *esp* and that *usu* are wonderful. I suppose it's just possible to imagine a context in which a white might call a white a honky, or in which kike would not be offensive, but you would need to try hard, and you would be very deep in irony.

The haunting questions have to do with the consequences we draw from the argument that language is the measure of us. In another form this is the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which holds (in Wilson's paraphrase) that "we must see the world as the grammar of our language organizes it for us". It is clear that our grammar does organize our perception, and that it reflects various ethnocentricities and habits of male dominion. What is not clear is how fully or entirely it organizes our perception, how much room we have left for manoeuvre. If we have none, we cannot get the language we deserve, since the concept of deserving is inapplicable. Wilson is confident that if we change our values our language will change with them, but this is not much more than a truism, and could be taken as an excuse for leaving both language and values alone. Do we want to change our values, and how do we do it? Meanwhile, is there anything we can do with language? Wilson doesn't answer (or ask) the first question, and to the second he answers, quite sensibly, "Only tinker". He is a liberal in language studies, a *describer* rather than *prescribe* man - although he likes dictionaries which discuss usage (like as a conjunction, *disinterested* versus *uninterested*, the proper meaning of *enormity*), allowing users themselves to see where they stand and make their choices. To linguistic conservatives he offers the fable of King Canute, and Carlyle's answer to Margaret Fuller's statement that she accepted the universe: "She'd better." Wilson misses, as good liberals often do, the polemical flash and the moral design of the conservative position. Conservatives know they cannot command the sea of change, if it is a sea, and they will run like everyone else when the tide comes in. But they do not see why they should run before it comes in, and they think shouting at the waves is good

for the nation's health. They also know that words are not waves, and that there is just a chance they might be able to beat the metaphor. Not much of a chance, but enough to keep a moralist in business.

The hidden agenda of *Rip Van Winkle's Return* doesn't look hidden, it looks like an open debate. But this is where the linguistic liberal turns into the conservative patriot. Wilson is in favour of bilingualism if it means an equal mastery of two languages, but against it in one of its current acceptations: the teaching of Americans in a language or dialect other than standard English. His argument is humane and sound as far as language is concerned. In a bilingual system minority groups will learn less rather than more English; if they have less English they will be more disadvantaged; and the best way to learn a language is not to be shielded from it but to be thrown into it. The assumption here though is that America can't change and that the rule of the white Anglo-Saxons and their converts is eternal. The melting-pot is still an ideal, and it means only one tune, which would-be Americans had better learn. What gives Wilson's game away is his endorsement of Teddy Roosevelt's terrible jingoism and his fear of America's becoming "a polyglot boarding-house". Wilson says this language is "by no means silly". Of course it is not silly, it is the eloquent, bullying voice of conformity itself. Wilson panics at this point, forgets all his own reminders about context and our getting the language we deserve, and sees linguistic division as some sort of lethal nightmare, one of the forces behind killings in Belgium, India and Sri Lanka. If he is being disingenuous, or just innocent and over-excited! Does he really not see that the current campaign to make English the only official language of the United States is a bid to shore up an old style of white supremacy, an attempt to pass Canute off as George Washington? Another name for the polyglot boarding-house would be riches or diversity or even democracy if the word were not so covered in fuzz. This is not to say that all languages should not be taught tenderly and well; only to suggest that the boarding-house will be more liveable than the frightened monolingual palace.

the uniqueness of American language and the ease with which most Americans communicated across only faintly demarcated lines of class, ethnic, educational, and economic difference. In short, by 1940 Wilson had left Marxism-Leninism in the ditch, reverting to New Deal Democrat in his politics and to a free-wheeling Emersonianism in his cultural purview. These shifts justify the final terms of Homberger's title - "equivocal commitments".

The book is well researched, drawing on many primary manuscript sources. Particularly good is the account of several writers' responses to the Ludlow Massacre of 1914, an atrocity apparently plotted by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and carried out by company associates and state militia. Far less absorbing, though no doubt indispensable to students of the period, are the many pages devoted to the history of writers' organizations, both American and Russian, the interminable wrangling, laying-down of lines, the pressuring and double-dealing which went on at the various conferences and congresses.

There are three appendices, of which the most interesting contains a correspondence between Trotsky and Philip Rahv, editor of the *Partisan Review*, concerning some articles the former might write (he never lived to do so) for the magazine. In the chapter on the Objectivists, Homberger never manages to show us Zukovsky and the others actually as poets, therefore making it difficult to draw lines of connection among aesthetic principles, the poetry itself and the politics of the group.

In a sense, that is the dilemma of the book as a whole. As an American studies specialist, Homberger tries to ride several horses at once, to provide the complex history of a movement, embedding in that history the lives of over a dozen personalities who were writers, and at the same time to give some critical interpretation and judgment of particular writings. The history part works out well; but by and large the writings receive superficial scrutiny.

Iniquity and inequity

David Chandler

GARY HAWES
The Philippine State and the Marcos Regime: The politics of export
196pp. Cornell University Press. £25.50. 08014 20121
JAMES HAMILTON-PATERSON
Playing with Water: Passion and solitude on a Philippine island
280pp. Macmillan. £12.95. 0333 447166

Gary Hawes and James Hamilton-Paterson both examine the Philippines in the 1980s, but aside from their clear-headedness they have little in common. Hawes's closely argued study of export crops is built up out of arguments and data. Hamilton-Paterson's more elusive memoir draws on a reservoir of experience and words.

Hawes's title promises more than his book delivers, but the aspects of the economy which he discusses with such skill are certainly crucial to understanding how the Marcos regime worked, and why it came apart. He argues persuasively that even before martial law was

declared in 1972, President Marcos and his cronies had undermined the social and economic arrangements that had governed the economy and sugar industries in the Philippines for over a hundred years. In the process they cast aside a well-entrenched political élite (including some of Corason Aquino's family). In the 1970s, moreover, the régime encouraged transnational companies to dominate the fruit products industry, in exchange for profit-sharing agreements, anti-union laws and a skilled, underpaid labour force. Behind a façade of technocratic "know-how" that pleased international lending bodies, Marcos and his followers deconstructed the Philippines' export sector, and made tens of millions of dollars for themselves. In the process, gaps between the new rich and the poor grew wider and deeper. When the economy faltered in the early 1980s, the bourgeoisie and, more slowly, the United States turned against Marcos, reopening Philippine politics and the country's badly damaged economy to the rough and tumble that had preceded martial law.

Hawes makes a compelling case that inequities in the Philippines will outlast Mrs Aquino. In his closing pages, he pleads for larger structural changes in the islands than

most people familiar with the region would be willing to predict, especially as changes on this scale might well set off a protracted civil war.

In *Playing with Water*, James Hamilton-Paterson tells us, without explaining why, that he has visited the Philippines for three or four months a year since 1979. His book deals with two such sojourns, in 1985 and 1986, when he stayed on a tiny island, "Tiwarik" (Tagalog for "upside down"), just off the coast of what would seem to be Luzon. He spent his time "living alone in the middle of the sea", writing, spear-fishing, and making friends with the people. In writing the book, he has turned a kind of video camera on to his surroundings, in a complex process, engagingly described, of alternately discovering and escaping from himself.

In doing so, he fuses the collings of poetry and journalism which he has followed since the 1960s. As a journalist, he provides a detailed picture of the islands; in a chapter about visiting Manila, he makes many telling political points. At the same time, there is something tentative about the book. Its form derives from its being pushed along by stretches of lyrical writing, rather than by thematic developments. These, in turn, are held in place by ruminations, à la Thoreau, about larger

themes and about Hamilton-Paterson's early life. Like many British authors, he looks for keys to his middle-aged behaviour in his early adolescence. His parents were both doctors; after a comfortable childhood he was educated at Canterbury and Oxford. He refers repeatedly to conflicts with his father, but these are made to seem touching rather than hurtful. A solitary, quizzical man in his forties is writing about a solitary, quizzical child. We learn almost nothing of the intervening thirty years. This rather cagey self-absorption means that the book is "personal" without being revealing. It is crisply written, however, and Hamilton-Paterson makes a lively, perceptive travelling companion, particularly when he takes us to visit his friends, on the mainland, or goes spear-fishing with them at night.

Neither Hamilton-Paterson nor Hawes has much patience with the upper reaches of Philippine society. Neither offers much comfort, in the long run, to the endearing, impoverished fishermen and their families whom Hamilton-Paterson has befriended. At the same time, both authors are aware of the volatility of Philippine life, which makes the future difficult to predict, and thus provides some basis for optimism, but not much.

intended for students or academic specialists. But it is more reliable where the analysis of economic issues is concerned. It also pays more attention to Soviet foreign policy.

Ann Pettitt was one of the women who organized the march to Greenham Common in 1981. D. I. Y. *Detente* is an account of the attempts that she and like-minded activists have made to extend their direct political action to the Soviet Union. The contributions are written with an immediacy and a candour that convey much of the excitement (and apprehension) that such a venture involves. They give a vivid picture both of Soviet urban society and of the convictions which motivate this section of the peace movement. The advice that the book contains - about how to behave in the Soviet Union if one wishes to make contact with "ordinary Russians" - is almost always sensible. But some of its judgments about social and economic conditions are mistaken: for example, it is not the case that crèches and kindergartens are available to all; in fact, only between half and two-thirds of Soviet children are accommodated in pre-school child-care facilities. And I would not regard the "minimal packaging" of products in Soviet stores as something to commend: too often the purchaser arrives home with an inedible mess in the bottom of the shopping bag.

seems wholly different from oneself. In fact, as he also demonstrates, many Jews and many Arabs have much less hostile attitudes to one another. However, it is the images of the extremists which tend to impose themselves on the communities as a whole.

Upon examination these views prove to be much the same as those historically held of each other by innumerable communities around the world. There is a similarity to the representations of Muslims devised by early Christians in order to protect their communities from corruption by the temptations of the culture of the invaders. They may also be compared with Muslim ideas of Westerners in Britain today, and with British attitudes to Irishmen and people of West Indian origin. The story which Shipley tells is no more than the usual mixture of tolerance and bigotry, the commonplaces of loves and hatreds, the conventions of kindness and cruelty which are the staple fare of two peoples obliged to share the same territory.

Like most other communities in a similar predicament, Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs do not want to share the same territory; each cherishes the hope of a future in which the other has disappeared from the land and, in the meantime, some already deny the claim of the 'other' community to exist. "Who are the Palestinians?" asked one Jewish fundamentalist quoted by David Smith. "They have no

credentials." Interestingly, a large proportion of Israeli Arabs today appear to be ready to abandon the Palestinian identity and to settle, were it obtainable, for full Israeli citizenship. In the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, however, attitudes are very different. There the Palestinian identity is strongly felt and proclaimed and the PLO is dominant. Yet changes appear to be in progress even on the West Bank. "We do not have the heart or stomach for this occupation", one Arab from Hebron remarked to Smith. And some Arabs, like Sari Nusseibeh, are prepared to contemplate radical solutions: to persuade Israel to annex the West Bank, to press for equality within the new State, perhaps to pin their faith in the celebrated demographic clock inexorably ticking towards an Arab majority. As these books show, the region has not stood still since 1967, although few of the changes have been those which were intended or planned by anyone.

These two books have the special merits of good journalism: the eye and the pen for the personality, the story, even the phrase which sums up an episode, a movement or an attitude. Among Shipley's many pen-portraits is one which highlights the universal elements in the Arab-Israeli problem. It is the story of an Arab who sought integration within Israel, married a Jewess and converted to Judaism. "I like the Arabs and I like the Jews", he said. "I like any man who doesn't hurt me."

Alastair McAuley

MARK FRANKLAND
The Sixth Continent: Russia and Mikhail Gorbachev
292pp. Hamish Hamilton. £12.95. 0241 12121
MARTIN McAULEY (Editor)
The Soviet Union Under Gorbachev
247pp. Macmillan. £29.50 (paperback, £9.95). 0333 439112
ANN PETTITT (Editor)
D.I.Y. Detente: A guide to meeting people in the Soviet Union
232pp. Quartet. £9.95. 07043 2606 X

Mark Frankland may have set out to write a book that explained how Mikhail Gorbachev became general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union - and thus leader of the world's second superpower. If so, he has failed. He does not provide a coherent account of the steps by which Gorbachev reached his present position; nor does he deal satisfactorily with the more technical shortcomings of the Soviet economy. And he has little to say about foreign policy.

What he has done, however, is to write a book that goes some way towards explaining why a man like Gorbachev rose to supreme office. *The Sixth Continent* describes the evolution of Soviet society under Brezhnev and his two ailing successors. It goes beyond the Kremlinological; but it does not focus upon those questions of structure or interest that concern political sociologists. Rather it tries to convey the sort of insight into the country and its politics that one would obtain through letters from a friend.

Frankland has produced a marvellous evocation of Russia, rather than the Soviet Union as a whole. He has drawn on a selection of recent novels, plays and films to add perspective to his picture. In this and other ways, he has managed to capture the depth of feeling that Russians have for their country: he conveys their almost mystical pride in the Russian language and its literature, their identification with the villages, fields and woods of the Russian countryside. He gives the impression that he shares in this pride; he could be mistaken for a Russian nationalist. As a result, he fails to convey any sense of the tensions that come from the fact that the Soviet Union is a multi-ethnic state and that the Russians about whom he writes so lovingly make up little more than half the total population.

The book describes a country that is evolving, a society with dreams and ambitions, led by a political élite with disparate goals. *The Sixth Continent* is particularly perceptive in its analysis of the role of military values in official (and popular) ideology. I can think of few better accounts of the way in which memories of the suffering of 1941-5 and justifiable pride in

the role of the Red Army in the defeat of Hitler have intertwined with a (selective) glorification of tsarist military achievement; and of the way in which these ideas have been used to bolster both the concept of modern Soviet patriotism and the priority enjoyed by the military in resource allocation. Frankland paints a suggestive picture of the militarization of Soviet society under Brezhnev. But he also understands that clear limits exist which prevent the armed forces from engaging in autonomous political action: Marshal Ogarkov is unlikely to have the opportunity to play the role of a Jaruzelski.

The militarization of the Soviet political élite was based to some extent on nostalgia, on memories of a shared comradeship in uniform and in defence of party and country. These memories - and their official recognition - contrast with the experiences of those young Soviet men who have fought in Afghanistan. Frankland is particularly good at evoking the social frictions and tension that have resulted from the embarrassed silence which surrounded the so-called peace-keeping force in the Soviet press until about 1985. I am sure that he is right to stress the potential long-term effects of this conflict on Soviet social psychology.

The attitudes of the Brezhnev generation

Between extremes

Malcolm Yapp

DAVID K. SHIPLEY
Arab and Jew: Wounded spirits in a promised land
595pp. Bloomsbury. £17.95. 07475 00371
DAVID SMITH
Prisoners of God: The modern-day conflict of Arab and Jew
256pp. Quartet. £12.95. 07043 26078

The publication of two more substantial books about the relations of the five or six million people now living within the borders of what was once Mandatory Palestine will increase their claims to be the most overstudied people in the world. Nevertheless, both *Arab and Jew* and *Prisoners of God* are interesting books and David Shipley is especially perceptive. In *Arab and Jew* he explores the images which the Israeli Jewish and Palestinian Arab communities have of each other. To the Jews the Arabs are violent, undisciplined, primitive, over-sexed and verging on the subhuman. To the Arabs the Jews are violent, untrustworthy, grasping and verging on the superhuman. As he suggests, these ideas of each other serve to keep the communities apart and are intended to do so; it is much easier to hate someone who

FALL 1987

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Radical wranglings

Julian Moynahan

ERIC HOMBERGER
American Writers and Radical Politics, 1900-39: Equivocal commitments
268pp. Macmillan. £27.50. 0333 391764

The American writers covered by Eric Homberger principally are: Jack London and Upton Sinclair, both old-style socialists whose politics acquired edge and point after, in London's case, an investigation by him of the poor of the East End of London, and, in Sinclair's, an exposé which he carried out of the Chicago meat-packing industry; the Greenwich Village intellectual and ideological "playboy" Max Eastman, who moved from Communism to Trotskyism to right-wing conservatism over a long life of activism combined with poetastering; John Reed, the Harvard golden boy who reported the Mexican and Russian revolutions, and in between the two wrote about the Ludlow, Colorado, massacre of striking coal-miners and their families, ending up buried by the Kremlin wall; the critic Edmund Wilson, who turned hard left and then not-so-left during the post-1929 Depression; and, finally, the group of poets known as the Objectivists, consisting of Louis Zukovsky, George Oppen, and Charles Reznickoff, followers of William Carlos Williams.

The radical politics of the title take off from the Social Democratic faith of Eugene V. Debs, who helped to found the American Socialist Party between 1898 and 1901, became its presidential candidate and received a prison sentence for his pacifist stance during the First World War. Homberger discusses the first American Communist writers following the Bolshevik Revolution, together with the many fellow travellers who emerged as Soviet Russia acquired an international cultural influence through the Comintern and such front orga-

nizations as Proletkult and the International Union of Revolutionary Writers. However, Trotsky's departure from Russia caused a number of American writers to modify their revolutionary expectations, while the Moscow treason trials disillusioned others. By the end of the 1930s, most liberal and leftist writers had a clear choice to make between reclaiming their independence from Moscow's influence (it had never been total control) or declining into Stalinist hacks. The change in direction of the journal *New Masses* between the two world wars, from a modest liveliness and suppleness to sectarian Communist rigidity, exemplifies the Stalinizing trend. But most writers who had counted themselves radical turned another way, either settling for a diffuse, vaguely Trotskyist revolutionism or reassuming a liberal and humanitarian attitude which had been their original point of departure into radicalism.

Homberger's best case in point is probably Edmund Wilson. The publication of *Axel's Castle*, Wilson's mandarin study of High Modernism and its origins, practically coincided with the Wall Street Crash. Homberger comments with unwonted wit. "It was closing time in Axel's Castle", then quotes Wilson of that time saying, "the private imagination in isolation from the life of society seems to have been exploited and explored as far for the present as possible". Over the next several years Wilson voiced his Marxist beliefs loudly; sometimes in reproach of less radicalized writers such as Archibald MacLeish (whose response was the offer of a punch on the jaw). He also began his studies for *To the Finland Station* (1940), intended to be a massive reconstruction of the cultural, biographical and historical roots of Marxism-Leninism. During the decade in which he wrote it, however, Wilson's social convictions suffered a sea-change: he came to appreciate that the great revolution was the American not the Bolshevik one; that American writing as cultural production could never sedulously ape any European trend, owing to

